

FLASH'S NEW ALLY, ENGINEER KATON, SPEEDS HIM AND ZARKOV OUT OF THE ICY NORTH TOWARD MINGO TO RESCUE DALE—



NEAR THE OUTSKIRTS OF MINGO, IN THE CENTER OF THE EMPEROR'S PRIVATE HUNTING FOREST, A TWISTED RAIL HURLS THE ROCKET-ENGINE OFF THE TRACKS!



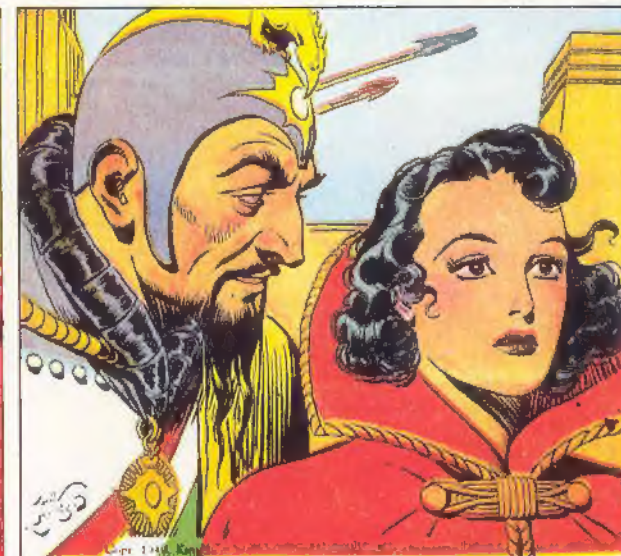
LOGUN
HUGE
LEADER OF
AN OUTLAW
BAND, GRUNTS
DISAPPOINTEDLY—
"JUST AN ENGINE!
NO CARS AND
PASSENGERS!
NO GOLD OR
RANSOM! QUICK—
GRAB THE
ENGINEER!"



BUT THE OUTLAWS FIND THREE MEN ON THEIR HANDS INSTEAD OF ONE. LOGUN, GOING TO THE AID OF THREE OF HIS MEN, WHO ARE BEING MAULED BY A YOUNG BLONDE GIANT, HOLDS UP HIS HAND—
"HOLD EVERYTHING, MEN! IT'S FLASH GORDON!"



LOGUN GRIPS FLASH'S HAND—"WE WERE YOUR FREEMEN—THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD—LOST HOPE—TURNED OUTLAW TO KEEP ALIVE—WILL YOU LEAD US AGAIN?"
"GLAD TO, LOGUN," SAYS FLASH.



MEANWHILE, ON THE PROMENADE DECK OF MING'S PALACE, THE INSIDIOUS EMPEROR LOSES NO OPPORTUNITY OF INCREASING DALE'S MENTAL ANGUISH—"YES, I HAVE GREAT PLANS FOR YOU—WHEN I NO LONGER NEED YOU TO BAIT MY TRAP FOR FLASH GORDON!" "I'M NOT AFRAID OF WHAT HAPPENS TO ME," SAYS DALE. "AS LONG AS FLASH IS FREE!" **NEXT WEEK—**
—A MESSAGE TO MING—



FLASH HAS ONCE MORE ASSUMED LEADERSHIP OF HIS FREEMEN. AS A RESULT OF MING'S PERSECUTION, ONLY A TATTERED REMNANT REMAINS OF HIS ONCE-POWERFUL BAND. WHEN FLASH TELLS THEM OF DALE'S CAPTURE BY MING, EVERY MAN SECRETLY PLEDGES HIS LIFE TO HER RESCUE —



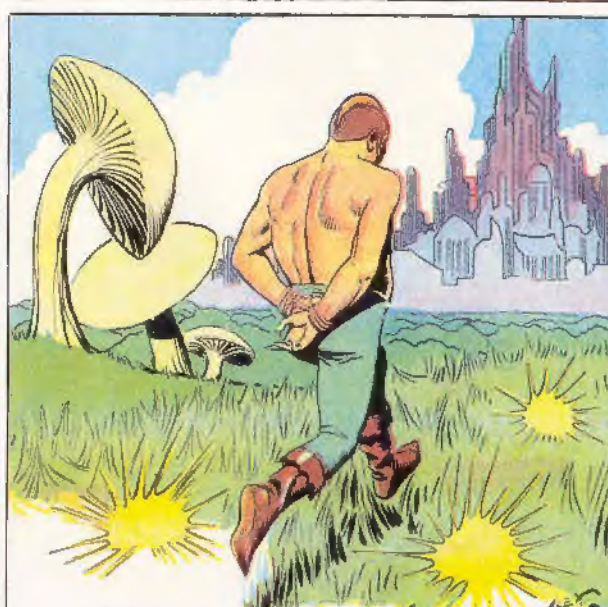
— WITH THE EXCEPTION OF LITTLE, RAT-FACED PITAL. HIS BEADY EYES GLITTER AS HE RECALLS THAT MING HAS PLACED A PRICE OF ONE THOUSAND GOLD MINGOLS ON FLASH GORDON'S HEAD!



FLASH'S FIRST MOVE IS TO CAPTURE AN OFFICER OF MING'S FOREST RANGERS — "HE'LL DO BEAUTIFULLY, BOYS," SAYS FLASH — "NOW, STRIP HIM TO THE WAIST!"



IGNORING THE OUTRAGED CAPTAIN'S CURSES AND THREATS, FLASH SETS TO WORK ON HIS TORSO WITH A BOWL OF INDELIBLE DYE AND A FRAYED STICK FOR A BRUSH —



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THEY LATER RELEASE THE RANGER ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE FOREST AND HURRY HIM TO MINGO BY PEPPERING THE GROUND BENEATH HIS FLYING FEET WITH RAY-GUN CHARGES —



LATER, THE WRATHFUL OFFICER APPEARS BEFORE HIS EMPEROR — "THE INSOLENT DOG!" SNARLS MING — "HOW EVER, I'M GLAD TO SEE THAT HE IS WALKING INTO MY TRAP! SEND GENERAL LIN-CHU TO ME AT ONCE!"

NEXT WEEK ~ FATEFUL MEETING ~

FLASH AND HIS GROWING BAND OF FREE-MEN COME IN SIGHT OF MINGO, DETERMINED TO RESCUE DALE FROM MING, THE MERCILESS—



"WE'LL SLIP IN ONE BY ONE AS PLANNED," SAYS FLASH—"LOGUN, DO YOU OR PITAL KNOW A GOOD MEETING PLACE?" "YES," ANSWERS LOGUN—"THE EMPTY RAY-LABORATORY ON THE EDGE OF THE CITY."



AT MIDNIGHT, FLASH REACHES THE ROYAL PALACE WITHOUT INCIDENT—BUT WHEN HE ATTEMPTS TO SCALE THE WALL, A POWERFUL BEAM OF LIGHT PICKS HIM OUT AND SENTRIES OPEN FIRE FROM A WATCH-TOWER—



FLASH DROPS BACK TO THE STREET AND DODGES INTO A SUBWAY. IN ITS TUNNELS HE FINALLY SHAKES OFF HIS PURSUERS.

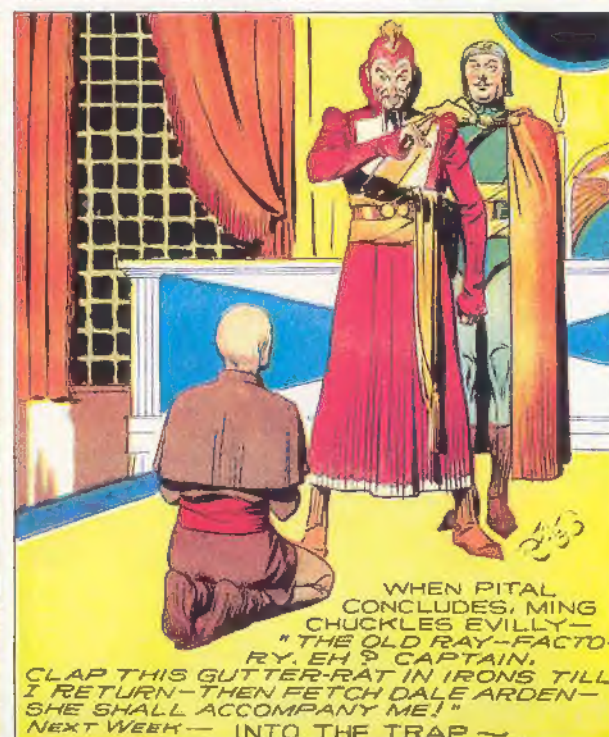


MEANWHILE, PITAL APPEARS AT THE PALACE GATE AND BEGS TO SEE THE EMPEROR—"I KNOW IT'S LATE," SAYS PITAL TO THE OFFICER OF THE GUARD—"BUT TELL HIM I BEAR NEWS OF FLASH GORDON!"



SUCH IS THE POWER OF FLASH'S NAME THAT PITAL IS RECEIVED BY MING IN HIS PRIVATE CHAMBERS—"I CLAIM THE REWARD, O EMPEROR," BABBLES PITAL—"I KNOW WHERE FLASH GORDON IS!" "OUT WITH IT!"

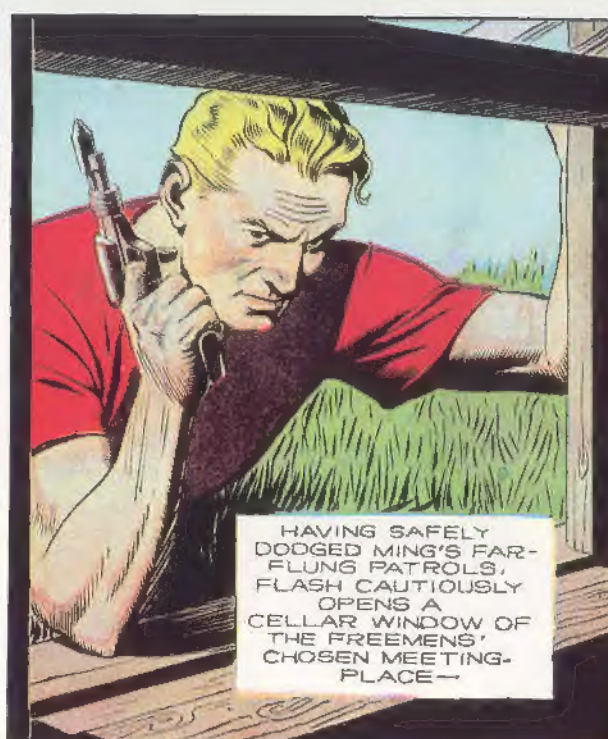
SNARLS MING—"YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU DESERVE, IF YOU SPEAK THE TRUTH!"



WHEN PITAL CONCLUDES, MING CHUCKLES EVILLY—"THE OLD RAY-FACTORY, EH? CAPTAIN, CLAP THIS GUTTER-RAT IN IRONS TILL I RETURN—THEN FETCH DALE ARDEN—SHE SHALL ACCOMPANY ME!" NEXT WEEK— INTO THE TRAP—



LEARNING OF FLASH'S PLAN TO MEET HIS FREEMEN IN THE OLD RAY-LABORATORY, MING SETS HIS TRAP THERE AND CRUELLY FORCES DALE TO WITNESS THE PROCEEDINGS—
 "I'M DELIGHTED TO HAVE SO CHARMING A GUEST," HE SNEERS.
 "I TRUST THE ENTERTAINMENT WILL NOT BORE YOU!"



HAVING SAFELY DODGED MING'S FAR-FLUNG PATROLS, FLASH CAUTIOUSLY OPENS A CELLAR WINDOW OF THE FREEMEN'S CHOSEN MEETING-PLACE—



"SOME-ONE'S COMING!" WHISPERS AN OFFICER—
 "LET HIM IN," SAYS MING—
 "THEN CLOSE IN—IF YOU CAN'T HOLD HIM, SHOOT TO KILL!"



BUT DALE RECKLESSLY HURLS HERSELF AT A GIANT GLASSITE TANK, UPSETTING IT WITH A WARNING CRASH!



THE CHEMICALS RELEASED FROM THE SMASHED TANK BURST INTO FLAME—"YOU LITTLE DEVIL!" HISSES MING—"YOU STARTED THIS—NOW FRY IN IT!"



MING TURNS AND WALKS AWAY, LEAVING DALE TO THE FLAMES—"ORDER YOUR MEN OUT OF HERE," HE SNARLS—"THIS PLACE WILL BE AN INFERN! SOON, IF GORDON IS HIDING IN HERE, THE FLAMES WILL SOON FORCE HIM OUT—AND INTO OUR HANDS!"

NEXT WEEK — THE RING OF FLAME

DALE HAS RISKED HER LIFE TO WARN FLASH OF MING'S TRAP--NOW, CRUELLY ABANDONED BY MING AND HIS MEN, SHE RESIGNS HERSELF TO DEATH--GLAD SHE HAS SAVED HER BELOVED FLASH!



BUT INSTEAD OF RUNNING AT DALE'S WARNING AND FACING ALMOST CERTAIN CAPTURE BY THE SOLDIERS SURROUNDING THE BUILDING, FLASH REMAINS INSIDE. HIS BLOOD RUNS COLD AT THE SIGHT OF DALE'S PREDICAMENT!



EVEN FLASH'S DESPERATE STRENGTH IS DEFIED BY THE BRONZINE CHAIN AND LOCK--WILDLY HE LOOKS ABOUT FOR SOME MEANS OF SAVING DALE--"IT'S NO USE," GASPS DALE, "SAVE YOURSELF, DARLING!"



WITH DEATH ONLY SECONDS AWAY, FLASH LEAPS THROUGH THE FIRE--HE SMASHES A HUGE CYLINDER OF FREEZITE ON THE FLAMES. FOAMING WHITE BUBBLES SPREAD FAST, SMOTHERING THE FIRE!



AN ALERT OFFICER, NOTICING THAT THE FLAMES ARE DYING DOWN, GLANCES INTO THE BUILDING. "HERE HE IS, MEN," HE ROARS. "AFTER HIM!"

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5-12-40



PAUSING ONLY LONG ENOUGH TO KISS DALE AND WHISPER, "I'LL BE BACK, SWEETHEART--KEEP UP YOUR COURAGE!" FLASH WHIRLS AND MAKES A DASH FOR FREEDOM!

-NEXT WEEK-
MING'S
MAN-HUNT



MING
AND HIS MEN
RE-ENTER THE
RAY-LABORATORY,
SPOILING FLASH'S
ATTEMPT TO FREE
DALE—"HUNT HIM DOWN!"
ROARS MING—"A
THOUSAND GOLD
MINGOLS!"



FLASH DODGES INTO A SMALL, DARKENED,
CHEMICAL LABORATORY, AS HIS PURSUERS
THUNDER PAST—



MING'S OFFICER PAUSES TO SEARCH THE
LABORATORY. FLASH WHIRLS HIM AROUND
AND DROPS HIM WITH A RIGHT TO THE JAW.



FLASH
SWIFTLY DONS
THE UNCONSCIOUS
OFFICER'S
UNIFORM—



DISGUISED, FLASH BOLDLY RETURNS TO
DALE, BUT FINDS HER TOO WELL-GUARDED.
HE STANDS HELPLESSLY BY, AS UNDER
MING'S WATCHFUL EYE, DALE IS HAND-
CUFFED TO A SOLDIER—

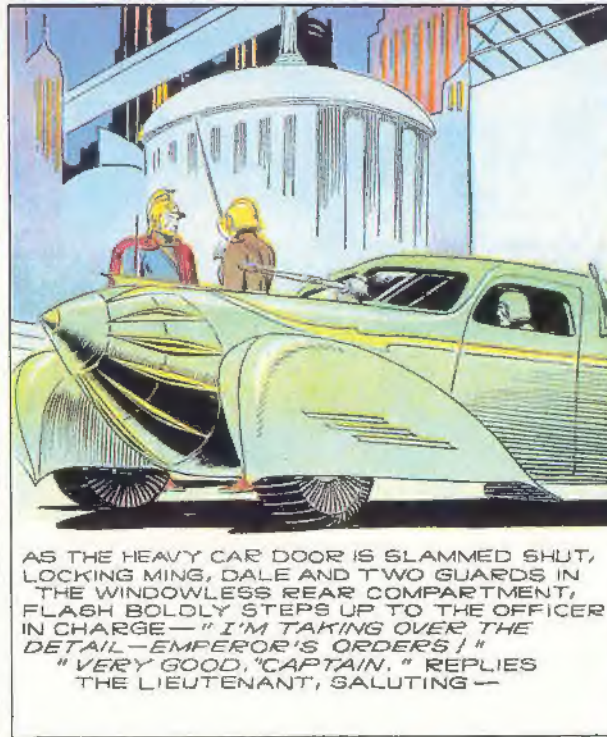


DALE IS THEN LED FROM
THE BUILDING—
"YOU, CAPTAIN,"
SNAPS MING OVER
HIS SHOULDER—
"REPORT TO YOUR
SUPERIOR FOR
FURTHER ORDERS—
FLASH GORDON
MUST BE FOUND!"

—NEXT WEEK—
—IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP



FLASH HAS ESCAPED MING'S TRAP BY DISGUIISING HIMSELF AS ONE OF MING'S OFFICERS. WHEN HE RETURNS TO RESCUE DALE, HE FINDS HER TOO WELL GUARDED. AS HE WATCHES, DALE IS FORCED INTO AN ARMORED CAR —



AS THE HEAVY CAR DOOR IS SLAMMED SHUT, LOCKING MING, DALE AND TWO GUARDS IN THE WINDOWLESS REAR COMPARTMENT, FLASH BOLDLY STEPS UP TO THE OFFICER IN CHARGE — "I'M TAKING OVER THE DETAIL — EMPEROR'S ORDERS!" "VERY GOOD, CAPTAIN," REPLIES THE LIEUTENANT, SALUTING —



UNNOTICED BY THE DRIVER, FLASH JAMS SHUT THE STEEL SHIELD OF THE OBSERVATION WINDOW, CUTTING OFF THE VIEW OF THOSE IN THE REAR COMPARTMENT. THEN HE STEALTHILY REACHES FOR THE DRIVER'S HELMET WITH HIS LEFT HAND AND DRAWS HIS GUN WITH HIS RIGHT —



FLASH WHIPS OFF THE MAN'S HELMET AND STUNS HIM WITH THE BUTT OF HIS RAY-PISTOL. "SORRY, OLD MAN," HE MUTTERS — "BUT I CAN'T WASTE TIME ARGUING WITH YOU!"



BUT WILY MING TAKES WARNING FROM THE "ACCIDENTAL" JAMMING OF THE OBSERVATION WINDOW AND THE CAR'S CHANGED ROUTE. HE OPENS THE REAR DOOR AND SNARLS — "JUMP!"

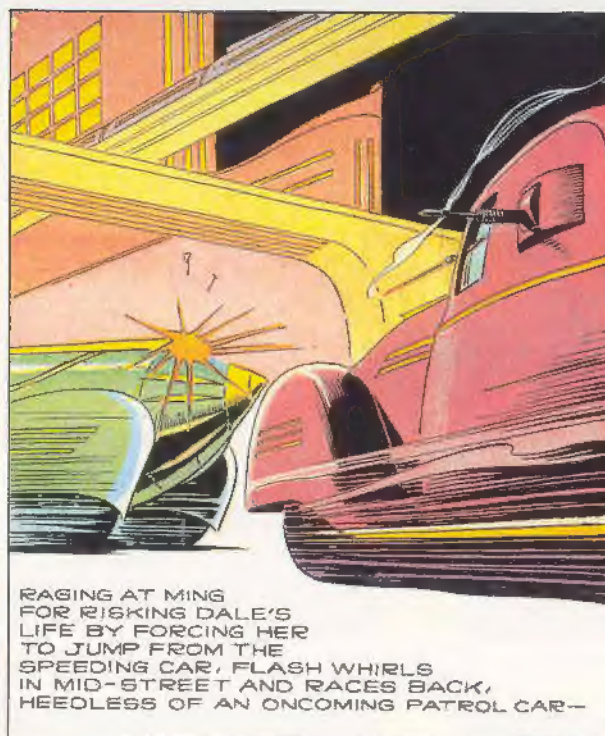


THE RUTHLESS EMPEROR USES HIS GUARDS AND THE HELPLESS DALE TO CUSHION HIS FALL FROM THE SPEEDING CAR — THEN HE RAISES A WHISTLE TO HIS LIPS AND SHRILLS AN ALARM!

NEXT WEEK — SMASH-UP



FLASH
DISCOVERS THAT
HIS PRISONER HAS
ESCAPED WHEN HE
GLANCES INTO HIS
VISAGRAPH AND
SEES DALE, MING
AND TWO GUARDS
SCATTERED IN THE
ROADWAY
BEHIND HIM—



RAGING AT MING
FOR RISKING DALE'S
LIFE BY FORCING HER
TO JUMP FROM THE
SPEEDING CAR, FLASH WHIRLS
IN MID-STREET AND RACES BACK,
HEEDLESS OF AN ONCOMING PATROL CAR—



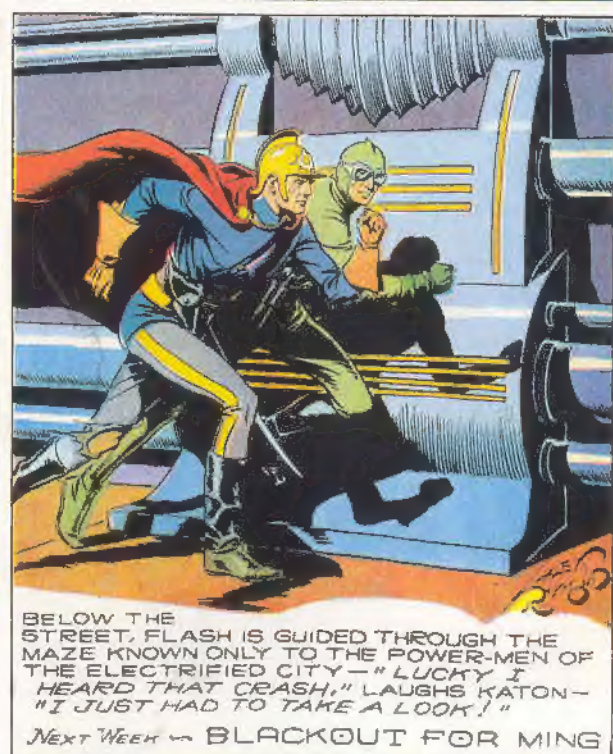
THE DRIVER OF THE PATROL
CAR, ANSWERING MING'S
CALL FOR HELP, IS
OBEDIENT TO
THE DEATH,
SMASHING
HEAD-ON
INTO
FLASH TO
STOP HIM—



DAZED, FLASH STAGGERS OUT OF THE
CRUMPLED MASS OF TWISTED METAL
TO SEE MORE PATROL CARS RUSHING UP,
THEIR GUNS BLAZING—



FLASH DECIDES TO RISK A DASH FOR
SAFETY, RATHER THAN BE SHOT DOWN
LIKE A CORNERED RAT, WHEN A HAND
CLUTCHES AT HIM AND A VOICE CALLS—
"DOWN HERE--QUICK!, IT'S I---"
KATON!"



BELOW THE
STREET, FLASH IS GUIDED THROUGH THE
MAZE KNOWN ONLY TO THE POWER-MEN OF
THE ELECTRIFIED CITY—"LUCKY I
HEARD THAT CRASH," LAUGHS KATON—
"I JUST HAD TO TAKE A LOOK!"

FLASH IS GUIDED TO THE SECRET UNDERGROUND LODGE OF THE POWER MEN—THE EXPERTS ON WHOM MONGO'S ELECTRIFIED CIVILIZATION DEPENDS. A BIG MAN, CLAD ENTIRELY IN RUBBEROID, GRIPS FLASH'S HAND—"I'M ERGON, CHIEF OF THE LODGE. WELCOME—AND MEET AN OLD FRIEND!" FLASH GRINS AT ZARKOV'S GREETING.



THE POWER MEN OUTFIT THEIR IDOL, FLASH, AND JOIN IN HIS SCHEME—"WHEN I THROW THIS SWITCH," SAYS ERGON, "IT WILL BLACKOUT MING'S PALACE."
"GOOD," SAYS FLASH, "LET'S GO!"



"GOOD HUNTING, FLASH," CALLS ERGON, AS HE TAKES HIS POST—"BRING ME BACK A SNIP OF THE OLD BLACKGUARD'S BEARD!"
"DON'T FORGET," ANSWERS FLASH, "THROW THE SWITCH IN EXACTLY NINE MINUTES."

MING, PREPARED AGAINST A RESCUE ATTEMPT BY FLASH, BANQUETS WITH THE UNHAPPY DALE—"IF I KNOW FLASH," SAYS MING, "AND I THINK I DO—IF I CAN JUDGE BY PAST PERFORMANCES, HE'LL COME SOON—AND WHEN HE DOES—"



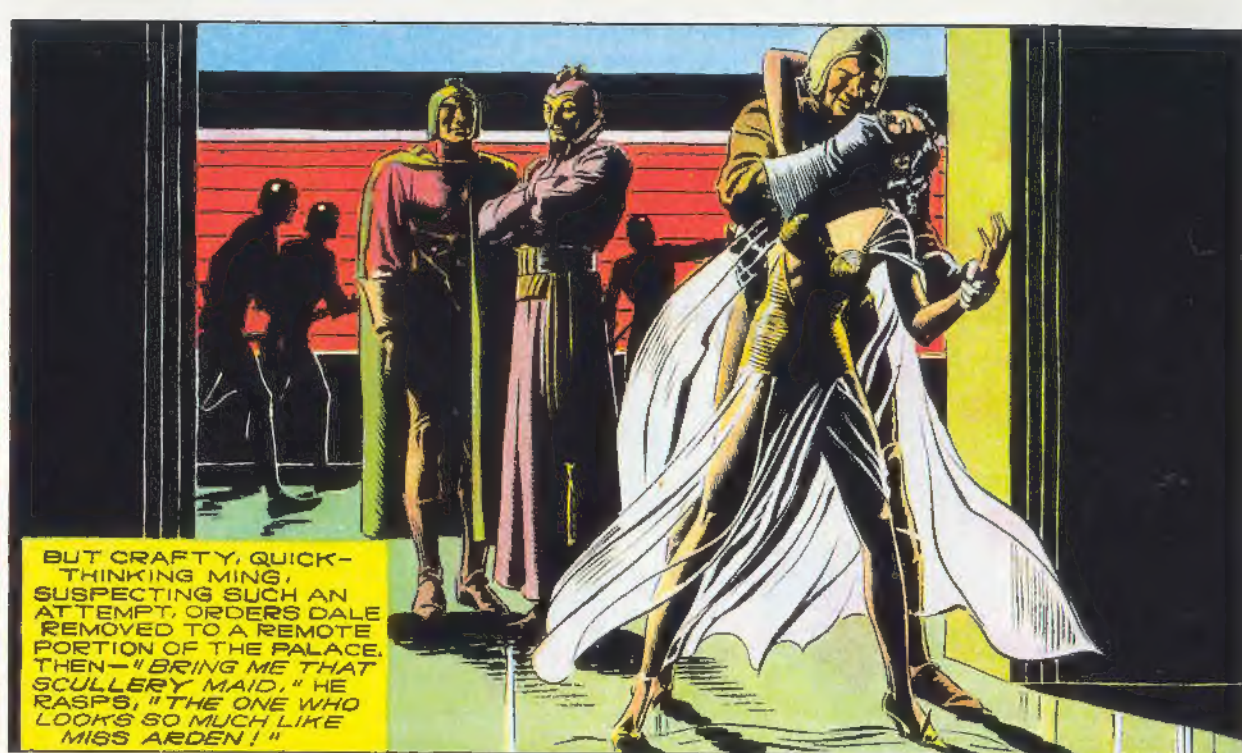
SUDDEN BLACKNESS OVERWHELMS THE PALACE—MING LEAPS TO HIS FEET—"LIGHTS! LANTERNS!" HE ROARS—"GUARDS! SURROUND THIS TABLE AND SHOOT ANYONE WHO APPROACHES!"

NEXT WEEK — THE EMPTY GOAL

FLASH AND ZARKOV, DISGUISED AS POWER-MEN, HAVE BLACKED-OUT MING'S PALACE LIGHTS AND GAINED ACCESS TO THE BUILDING BY A SECRET ENTRANCE—



LIKE TWO AVENGING SHADOWS, THEY DASH THROUGH THE PALACE CORRIDORS BENT ON RESCUING DALE—



BUT CRAFTY, QUICK-THINKING MING, SUSPECTING SUCH AN ATTEMPT, ORDERS DALE REMOVED TO A REMOTE PORTION OF THE PALACE. THEN—"BRING ME THAT SCULLERY MAID," HE RASPS, "THE ONE WHO LOOKS SO MUCH LIKE MISS ARDEN!"



THE THOROUGHLY-FRIGHTENED MAID IS QUICKLY BOUND AND GAGGED, LASHED TO DALE'S CHAIR AND PLACED AGAINST A WINDOW—

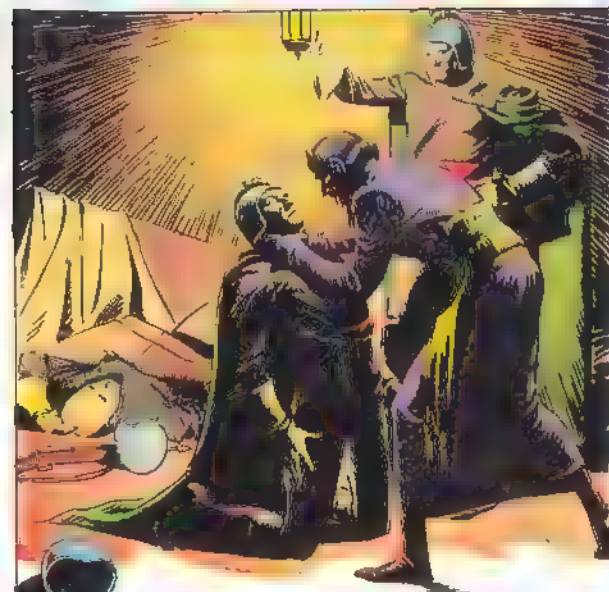


INCH BY INCH FLASH GLIDES INTO THE ROOM—THE MAID, UNABLE TO WARN HIM, TURNS HER FACE TO THE LIGHT, HOPING THAT HE WILL SEE THAT SHE IS NOT DALE ARDEN. FLASH SEES HIS MISTAKE—BUT TOO LATE!—



—WITH A RUSH, MING'S SOLDIERS CLOSE IN ON HIM AND PANDEMONIUM BREAKS LOOSE!

—NEXT WEEK—
GUARDED BY LIGHTNING

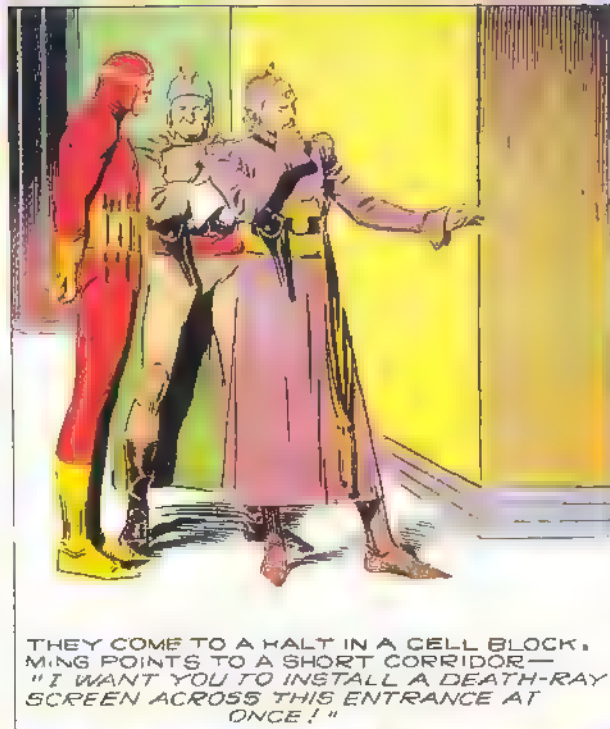


MING RETURNS TO THE ROOM IN WHICH HE HAD HOPED TO TRAP FLASH AND FINDS IT A SHAMBLES. HE SEIZES AN OFFICER AND HISSES—"PIG! YOU LET HIM ESCAPE! I'LL HAVE YOU SKINNED ALIVE FOR THIS!" "MISTAKE," GASPS THE OFFICER, "WASN'T FLASH--POWER-MAN!"



FLASH, DISGUISED AS A POWER-MAN, BOLDLY INTERCEPTS MING ON THE MAIN STAIRCASE—

"YOUR SOLDIERS ROUGHED ME UP A BIT, SIRE," HE SAYS, "I WAS ONLY SEEKING THE CAUSE OF THE BLACKOUT. I FOUND THAT SOMEONE HAD CUT THE MAIN POWER SWITCH."
"I'LL STATION SOMEBODY THERE HEREAFTER," SAYS MING, "COME WITH ME, FELLOW, I HAVE A JOB FOR YOU."



THEY COME TO A HALT IN A CELL BLOCK. MING POINTS TO A SHORT CORRIDOR—"I WANT YOU TO INSTALL A DEATH-RAY SCREEN ACROSS THIS ENTRANCE AT ONCE!"



FLASH GLANCES INTO A CELL BEYOND THE CORR.DOR AND HIS HEART GIVES A LEAP—FOR W. THIN IS DALE—AND THE DEATH-RAY SCREEN IS TO PREVENT HER RESCUE!



THE JOB FINISHED, HE TURNS TO MING, WHO MOTIONS FURTIVELY BEHIND HIS BACK—THE OFFICER RAISES HIS PISTOL—



—AND BRINGS IT CRASHING DOWN ON FLASH'S HEAD! "ALL RIGHT, CAPTAIN," SNEERS MING, "NOW THROW HIM INTO THE DEATH-RAY! I WANT TO SEE IF IT WORKS!"

—NEXT WEEK—
TRAPPED BY MISTAKE

FLASH, STILL DISGUISED, IS IMPRISONED THROUGH A PASSING WHIM OF MING'S CRUELTY. SNARLS MING: "I'LL KILL HIM LATER. THESE POWER-MEN ARE TOO PROUD TO SUIT ME."

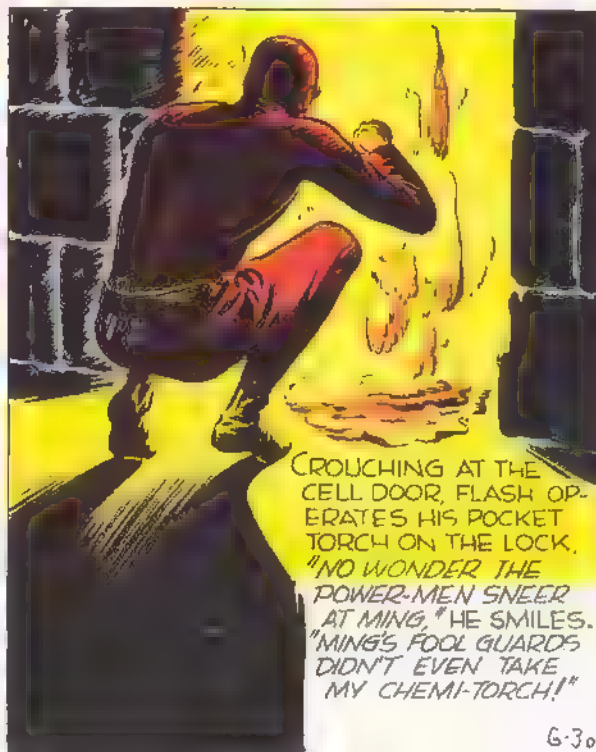


MEANWHILE, DALE WAITS IN A CELL, BAIT FOR A DEATH RAY TRAP MING HAS SET FOR FLASH. SHE PICKS UP A METAL PLATE, LOOKS DOWN THE EMPTY CORRIDOR. "I WONDER IF THE RAY STILL WORKS"



DALE TOSSES THE PLATE. AS IT REACHES THE PLACE WHERE THE RAY-WIRES ARE SET IN THE WALL, A DOZEN CRISS-CROSSING RAYS FLASH TOWARD THE PLATE, WHICH GLOWS AND FLAMES. DALE PUTS A HAND TO HER FACE: "OH, FLASH, PLEASE KEEP AWAY FROM HERE!"

FLASH WAKES TO FIND HIMSELF MING'S PRISONER. RUBBING THE BACK OF HIS HEAD, HE GROANS: "I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE AND SAVE DALE!"



CROUCHING AT THE CELL DOOR, FLASH OPERATES HIS POCKET TORCH ON THE LOCK. "NO WONDER THE POWER-MEN SNEER AT MING," HE SMILES. "MING'S FOOL GUARDS DIDN'T EVEN TAKE MY CHEMI-TORCH!"

DALE SEES THE FIGURE OF A POWER-MAN CREEPING DOWN THE SEEMINGLY EMPTY CORRIDOR. DALE WAVES HER HAND WARNINGLY. "KEEP AWAY! THE DEATH-RAY!-THE POWERMAN, FLASH, PUTS HIS FINGER TO HIS LIPS ...



—NEXT WEEK—

THE GAUNTLET OF FIRE

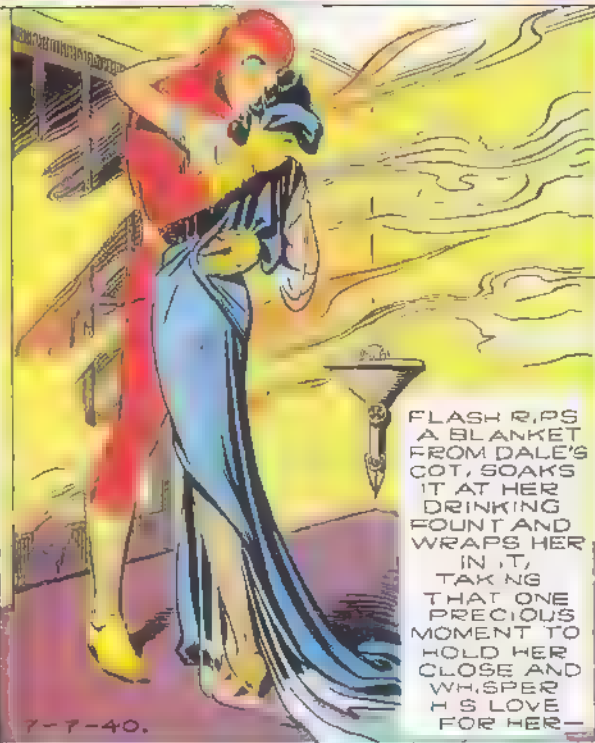
DISGUISED
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DALE
WATCHES
FEARFULLY,
AS FLASH,
AT THE
END OF THE
CORRIDOR
LEADING TO
HER
PRISON;
GINGERLY
BURNS
AWAY THE
RAY-CELLS.



FLASH'S CHEM-TORCH DESTROYS THE
RAY-TRAP WIRING—BUT ALL LUCK
CAUSES THE MOLTEN WRES TO SHORT-
CIRCUIT! FLASH STAGGERS BACK, AS THE
WHOLE SYSTEM BURSTS INTO FLAME!



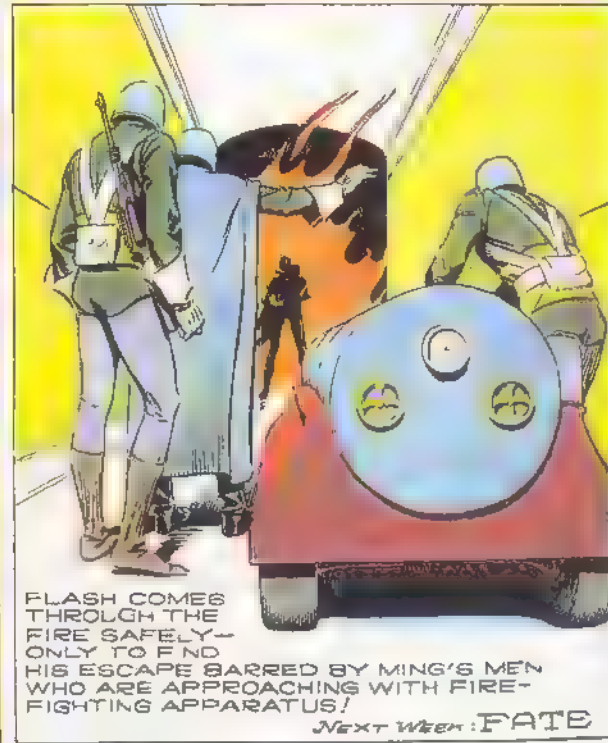
FLASH
PLUNGES
THROUGH THE
DEADLY FLAMES AND SETS TO
WORK ON THE BARS OF DALE'S CELL—
"HURRY," GASPS DALE, "FIRE ALARM!"



FLASH RIPS
A BLANKET
FROM DALE'S
COT, SOAKS
IT AT HER
DRINKING
FOUNT AND
WRAPS HER
IN IT,
TAKING
THAT ONE
PRECIOUS
MOMENT TO
HOLD HER
CLOSE AND
WHISPER
HIS LOVE
FOR HER—



HE THEN SWEEPS HER INTO HIS ARMS
AND DASHES BACK THROUGH THE
SEARING FLAMES—

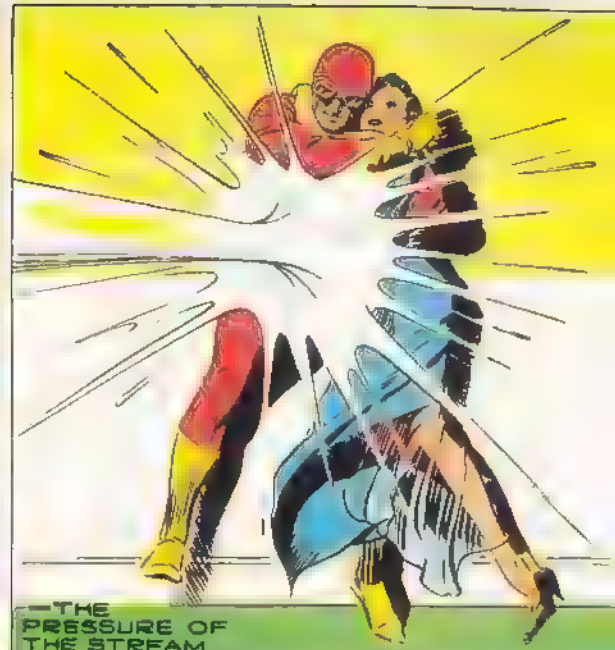


FLASH COMES
THROUGH THE
FIRE SAFELY—
ONLY TO FIND
HIS ESCAPE BARRED BY MING'S MEN
WHO ARE APPROACHING WITH FIRE-
FIGHTING APPARATUS!

NEXT WEEK: FATE



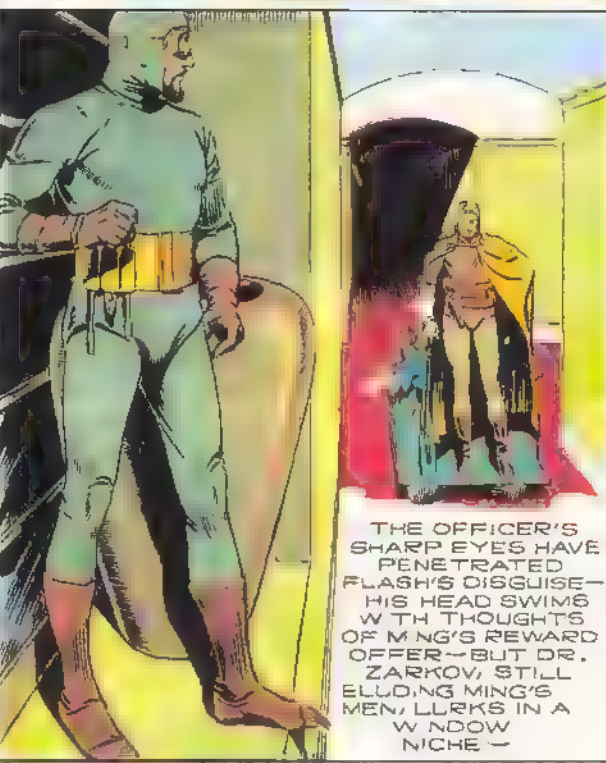
—ONE MAN TWISTS A VALVE ON THE FIRE-FIGHTING APPARATUS AND THE OTHER GUARD DIRECTS A POWERFUL STREAM OF CHEMICALS AT THE ONRUSHING FLASH—



—THE PRESSURE OF THE STREAM HURLS FLASH AND DALE AGAINST THE WALL WITH STUNNING FORCE—THE POWERFUL FUMES RENDERING THEM UNCONSCIOUS.



"TAKE THE TANK AND PUT OUT THE FLAMES," COMMANDS THE OFFICER, "AND THROW THESE TWO ON THE CHEMICAL TRUCK—I'LL TAKE THEM TO MING, MYSELF!"



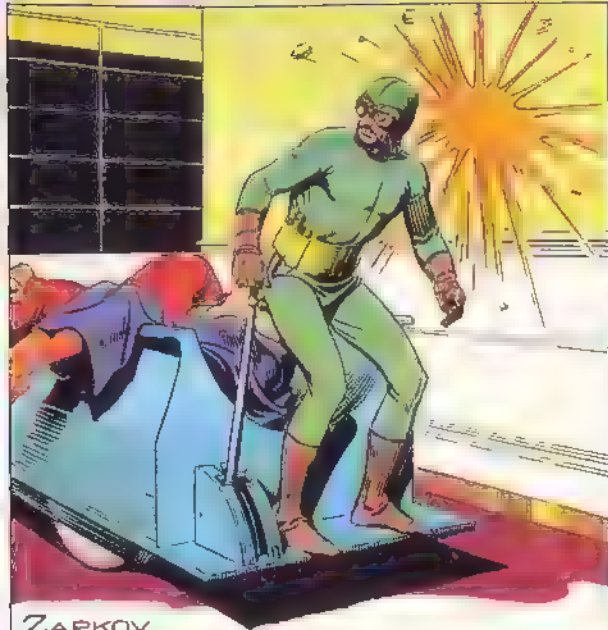
THE OFFICER'S SHARP EYES HAVE PENETRATED FLASH'S DISGUISE—HIS HEAD SWIMS WITH THOUGHTS OF MING'S REWARD OFFER—BUT DR. ZARKOV, STILL ELUDING MING'S MEN, LURKS IN A WINDOW NICHE—



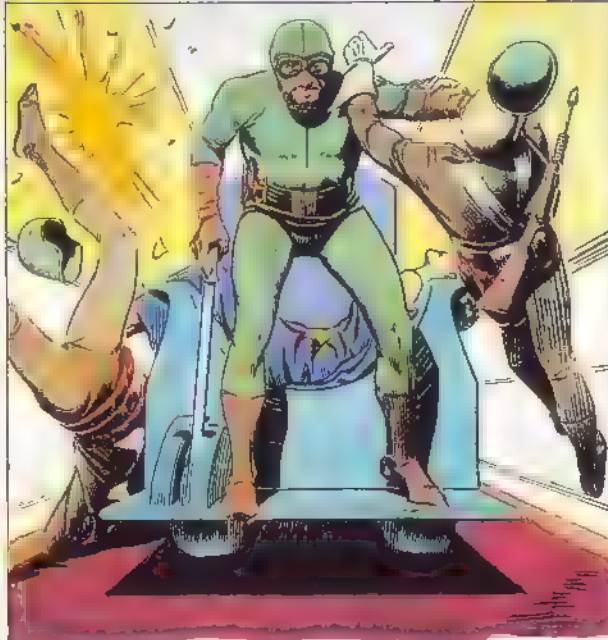
—ZARKOV LIFTS A HEAVY VASE FROM THE WINDOW-LEDGE AND HURLS IT WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH!

NEXT WEEK — ONE-WAY RIDE

7-14-40.



ZARKOV RESCUES THE UNCONSCIOUS FLASH AND DALE—BUT THE PALACE IS ROUSED—THE DOCTOR SENDS THE CHEMICAL TRUCK CAREENING THROUGH THE CORRIDORS, DESPERATELY SEEKING ESCAPE—



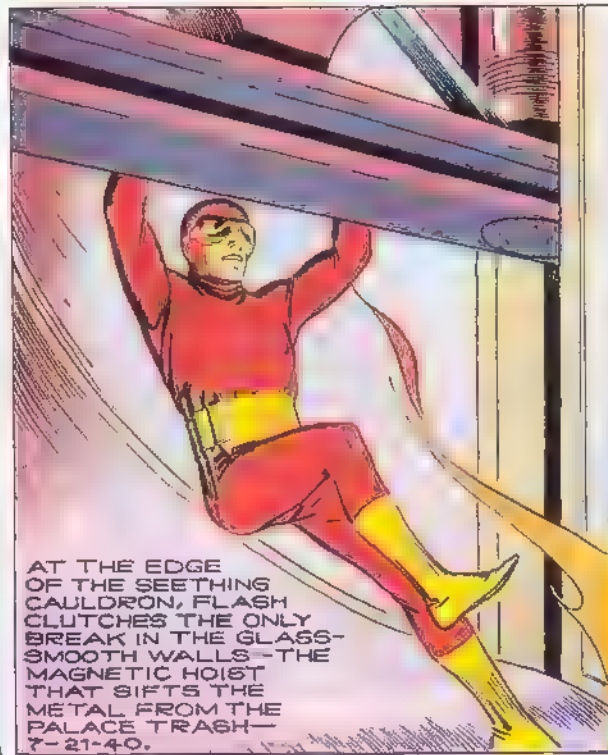
RAY-BOLT'S WHINE VENOMOUSLY AROUND HIM AS MING'S SOLDIERS CLOSE IN—



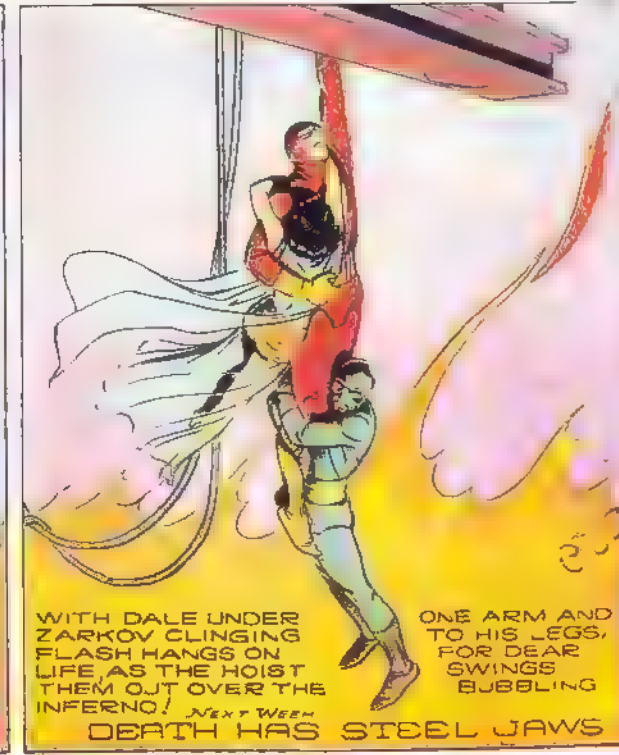
ZARKOV IS FINALLY TRAPPED IN A DEAD-END ALLEYWAY—"THEY'LL NEVER GET US ALIVE," HE SAYS, "NEVER!"—AND OPENS THE DOOR TO AN INCINERATOR TUBE!



THE GOOD DOCTOR HURLS FLASH AND DALE AND HIMSELF TO CERTAIN DESTRUCTION, RATHER THAN ALLOW MING THE PLEASURE OF TORTURING THEM TO DEATH. AS THEY APPROACH THE GREAT CHEMICAL VAT, THE HEAT REVIVES FLASH AND DALE—



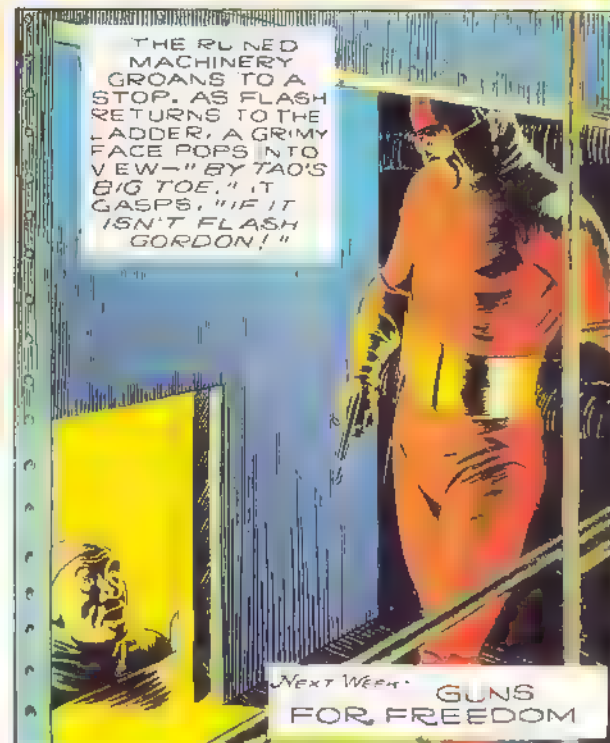
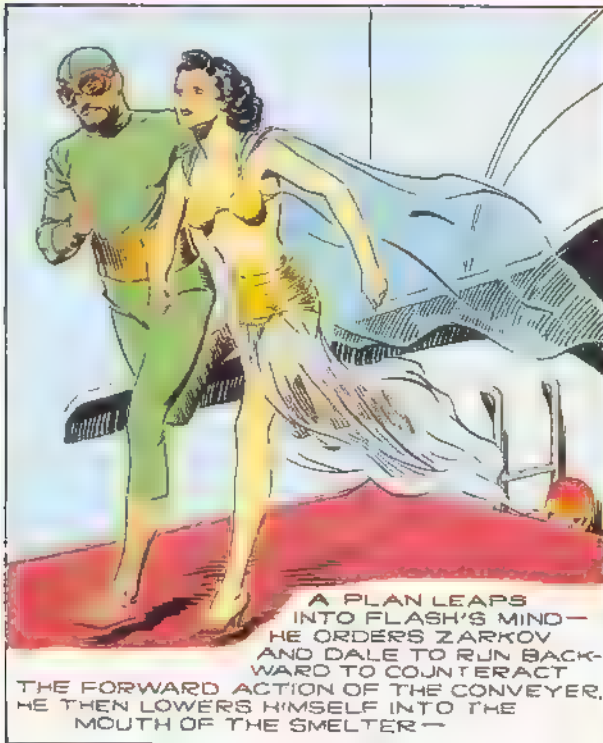
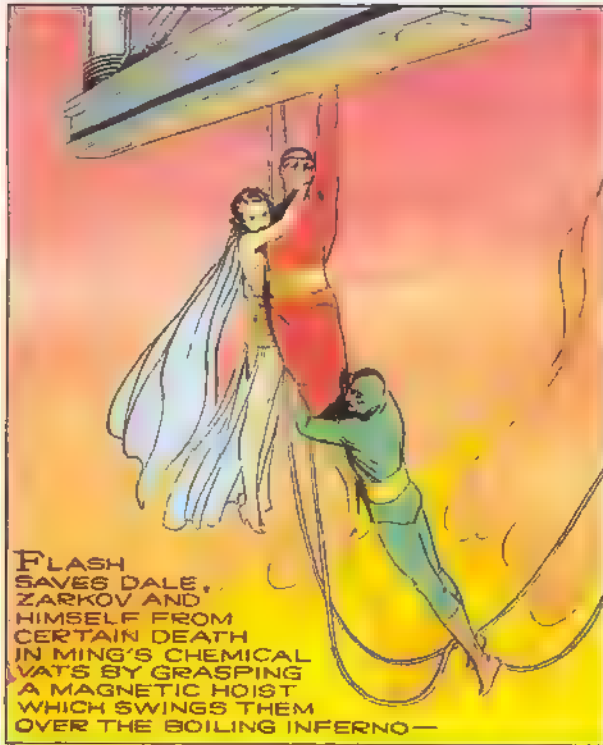
AT THE EDGE OF THE SEETHING CAULDRON, FLASH CLUTCHES THE ONLY BREAK IN THE GLASS—SMOOTH WALLS—THE MAGNETIC HOIST THAT SIFTS THE METAL FROM THE PALACE TRASH—

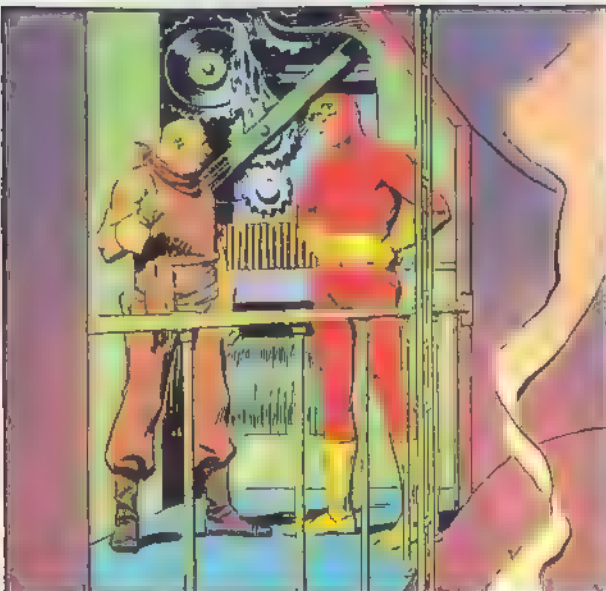


WITH DALE UNDER ZARKOV CLINGING TO HIS LEGS, FOR DEAR SWINGS BUBBLING

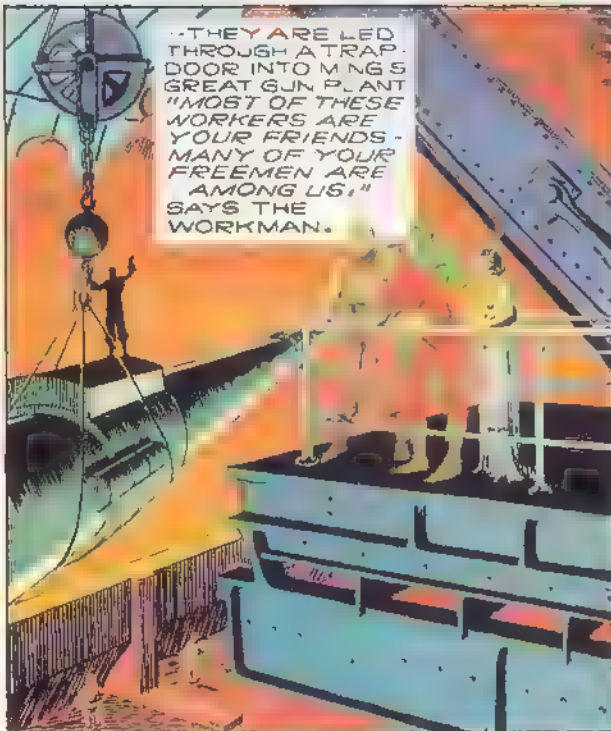
ONE ARM AND

DEATH HAS STEEL JAWS





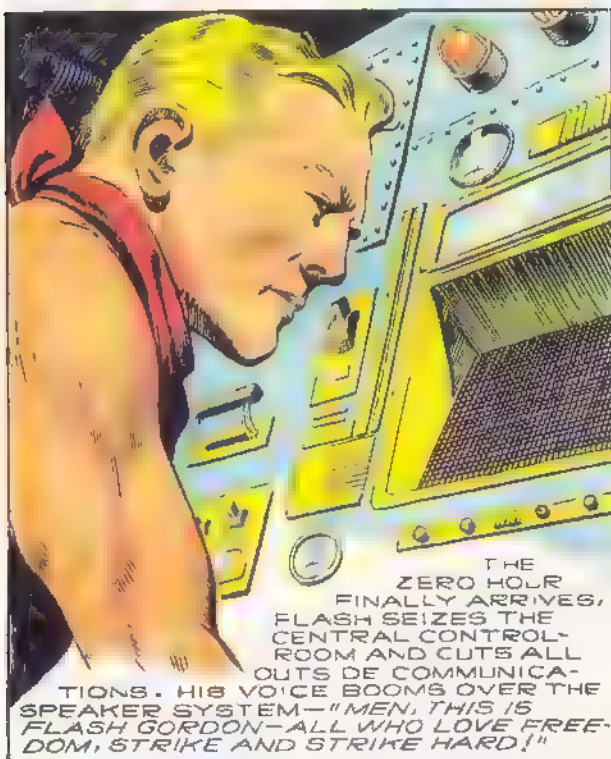
AFTER DESTROYING THE CONVEYER MACHINERY, FLASH IS ACCOSTED BY ONE OF MING'S WORKMEN—"I'D KNOW YOU ANYWHERE, FLASH," HE SAYS—"THIS BLAST FURNACE IS PART OF MING'S MUNITIONS PLANT—GET DALE AND ZARKOV—WE'LL HELP YOU ESCAPE"



"THEY ARE LED THROUGH A TRAP-DOOR INTO MING'S GREAT GUN PLANT "MOST OF THESE WORKERS ARE YOUR FRIENDS - MANY OF YOUR FREEMEN ARE AMONG US," SAYS THE WORKMAN.



A DARING PLAN FORMS IN FLASH'S MIND AND ALL HIS THOUGHTS OF ESCAPE VANISH. WORD IS SPREAD AMONG THE OPPRESSED WORKERS THAT THEIR IDOL, FLASH GORDON, IS IN THEIR MIDST



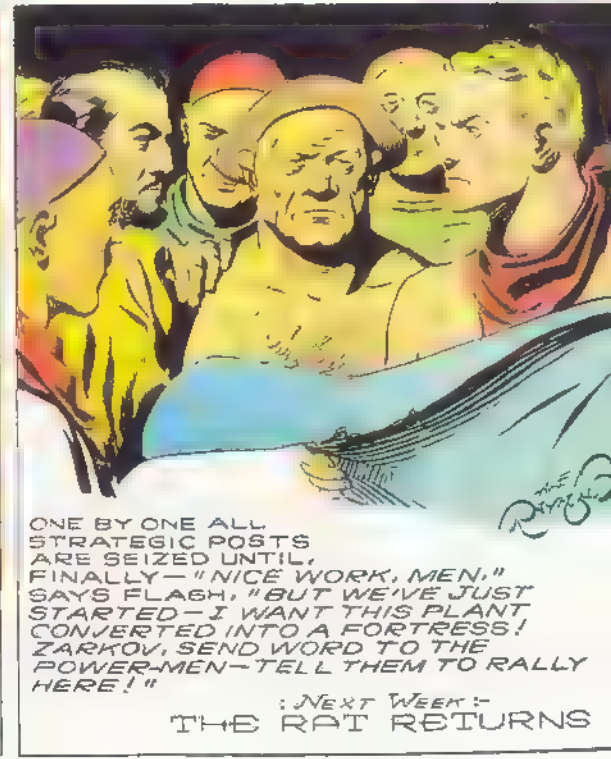
THE ZERO HOUR FINALLY ARRIVES, FLASH SEIZES THE CENTRAL CONTROL-ROOM AND CUTS ALL OUTS OF COMMUNICATIONS. HIS VOICE BOOMS OVER THE SPEAKER SYSTEM—"MEN, THIS IS FLASH GORDON—ALL WHO LOVE FREEDOM, STRIKE AND STRIKE HARD!"



IMMEDIATELY, THE FACTORY BECOMES A BEDLAM, AS THE INSPIRED SLAVE WORKERS TURN ON THE BRUTAL GUARDS -

Don't let King Rat in the way

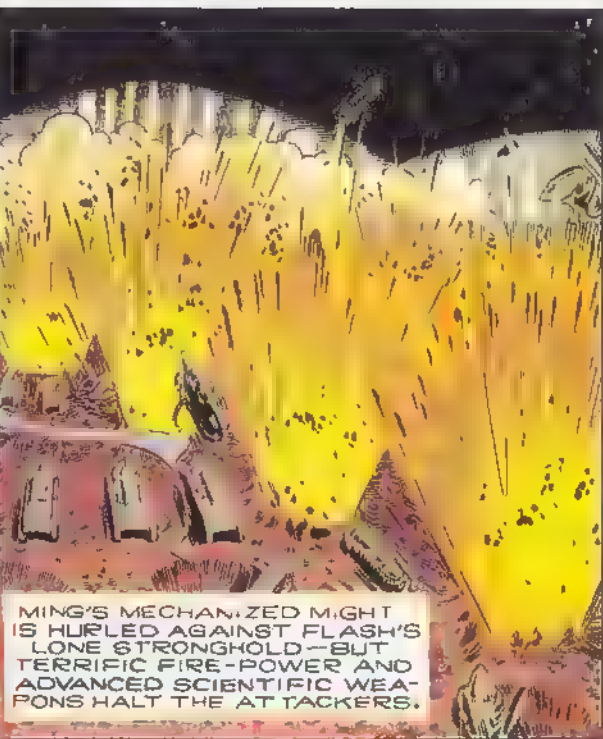
8 4 - 40.



ONE BY ONE ALL STRATEGIC POSTS ARE SEIZED UNTIL, FINALLY—"NICE WORK, MEN," SAYS FLASH, "BUT WE'VE JUST STARTED—I WANT THIS PLANT CONVERTED INTO A FORTRESS! ZARKOV, SEND WORD TO THE POWER-MEN—TELL THEM TO RALLY HERE!"

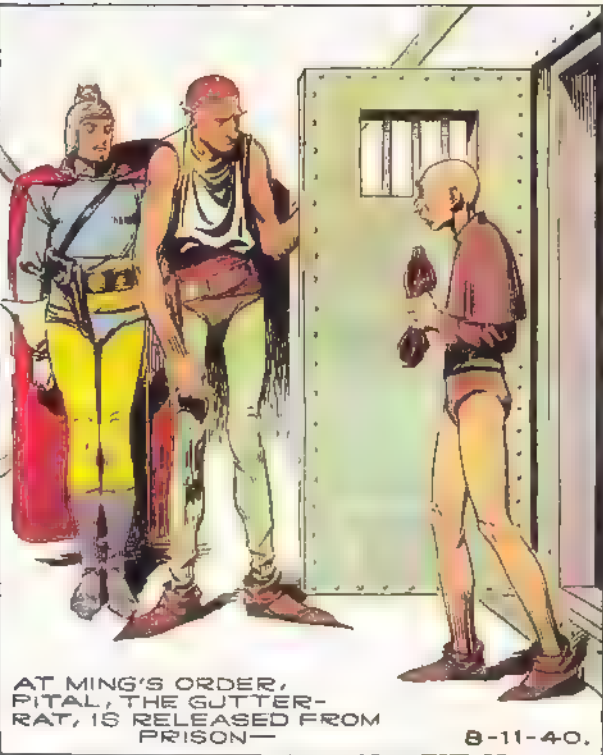
: NEXT WEEK :-
THE RAT RETURNS

AN OFFICER BRINGS
WORD TO MING THAT
FLASH GORDON HAS
SEIZED THE MAIN
GUN FACTORY AND
ARSENAL AND CON-
VERTED IT INTO A
FORTRESS—"CRUSH
HIM!"
STORMS
MING,
"SEND
THE
BUL-
LET
TANKS!"



MING'S MECHANIZED MIGHT
IS HURLED AGAINST FLASH'S
LONE STRONGHOLD—BUT
TERRIFIC FIRE-POWER AND
ADVANCED SCIENTIFIC WEAPONS
HALT THE ATTACKERS.

"LET ME BLAST THEM WITH AIR TOR-
PEDOES AND SEND THERMITON-THROW-
ERS AGAINST THEM," BEGS MING'S
GENERAL. "NO," ANSWERS MING, "WE'D
DESTROY OUR WEAPONS—I'LL SEND A
RAT TO
GNAW A
HOLE
IN-
STEAD!"



AT MING'S ORDER,
PITAL, THE GUTTER-
RAT, IS RELEASED FROM
PRISON—

8-11-40.



—AND, ONCE AGAIN, HE IS SENT TO
BETRAY FLASH GORDON. HE CREEPS
UP TO THE SCARRED, BUT STILL MIGHTY,
METAL DOOR OF THE MUNITIONS PLANT
AND CRIES FOR HELP—

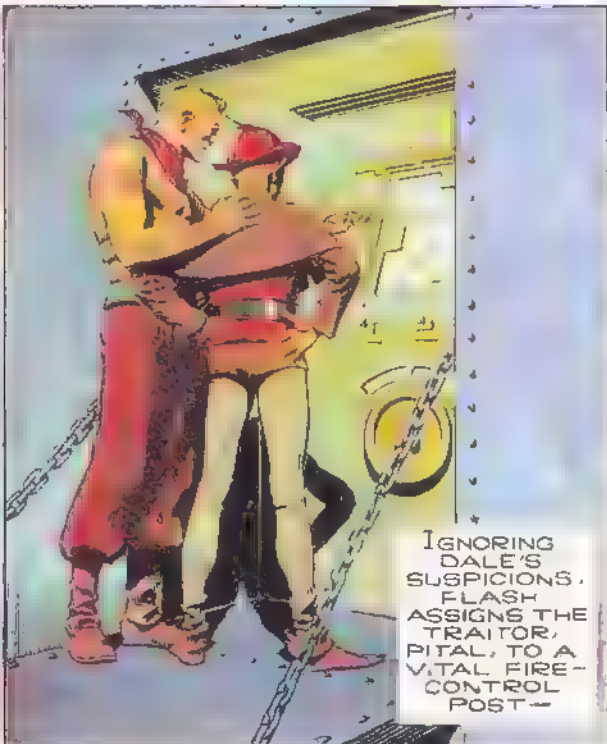
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"SO MING CAUGHT, BUT COULDN'T HOLD
YOU, EH, PITAL?" LAUGHS FLASH, "GOOD,
GLAD TO HAVE YOU
BACK WITH US!"



"FOR
SOME
REASON,"
SAYS
DALE TO
HERSELF,
"I DON'T
TRUST THAT
LITTLE
WEASEL!"

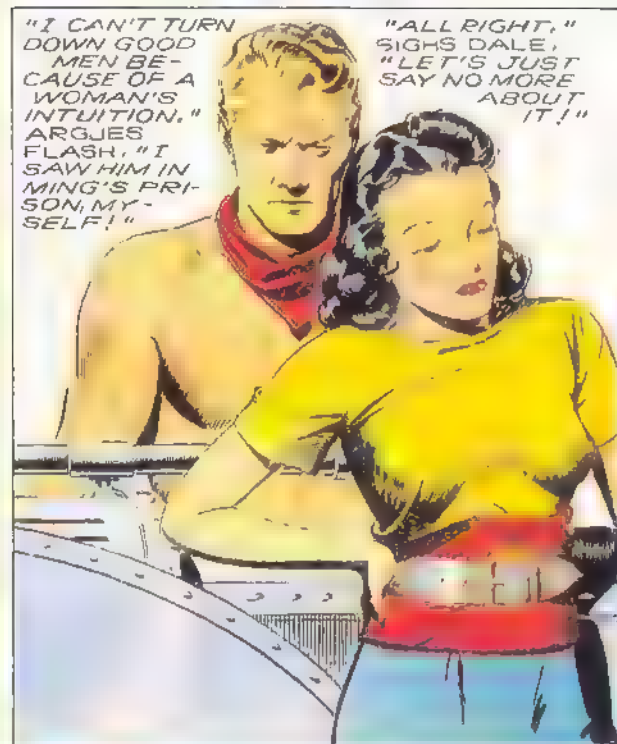
NEXT WEEK—
RAT-HOLE



IGNORING DALE'S SUSPICIONS, FLASH ASSIGNS THE TRAITOR, PITAL, TO A VITAL FIRE-CONTROL POST--



MING'S SPY, GREEDY FOR THE PROMISED REWARD, STEALS BEHIND THE SWITCH-BOARD AND SHORT-CIRCUITS THE AUTOMATIC GUN-CONTROL!



"I CAN'T TURN DOWN GOOD MEN BECAUSE OF A WOMAN'S INTUITION," ARGUES FLASH, "I SAW HIM IN MING'S PRISON, MYSELF!"

"ALL RIGHT," SIGHS DALE, "LET'S JUST SAY NO MORE ABOUT IT!"



HIS TREACHEROUS WORK DONE, PITAL LEAVES THE FORT AT DUSK BY WAY OF A VENTILATOR AND WORMS HIS WAY BACK TO MING'S LINES--



HE IS RUSHED TO MING, THE MERCILESS-- "AH," CHUCKLES THE EMPEROR, "SO THE SOUTH-WEST GUNS ARE SILENCED, EHP? IF YOU SPEAK THE TRUTH, YOU WILL GET YOUR REWARD--IF NOT, DEATH WILL BE YOUR PAYMENT!"



AND AS PITAL IS HUSTLED INTO THE LEADING FLAME-TANK, HE REALIZES THAT IF FLASH'S GUNS ARE TRULY SILENCED, HE WILL LIVE TO COLLECT HIS REWARD, IF NOT----

NEXT WEEK--
FLAMING
ATTACK--

8-18-40.

AS DAWN BREAKS, FLASH SEES LONG LINES OF MING'S DEADLY THERMITON TANKS SWEEPING TOWARD HIS FORTRESS—
 "WHY DOESN'T PITAL OPEN FIRE?" GROWLS FLASH.
 "MING IS AT TACKLING HIS SECTION!"
 "I'LL SEE," SAYS DALE.
 "I DON'T TRUST THAT MAN!"



DALE FINDS PITAL'S POST DESERTED. AS SHE VAINLY TRIES TO FIRE THE SABOTAGED GUNS, HER HEART SINKS—IT IS JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE FORT MUST FALL!

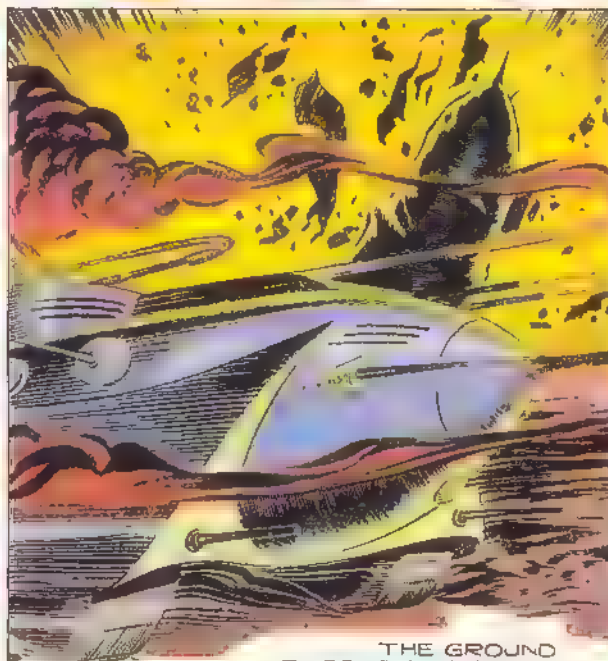


THE TRAITOR, PITAL, LEADS THE FLAME TANKS' ATTACK ON THE UNDEFENDED POST. THE INTERIOR OF THE TANK BECOMES INSUFFERABLY HOT, AS THE AWFUL THERMITON GUNS SPEW FORTH THEIR FLAMING DEATH—

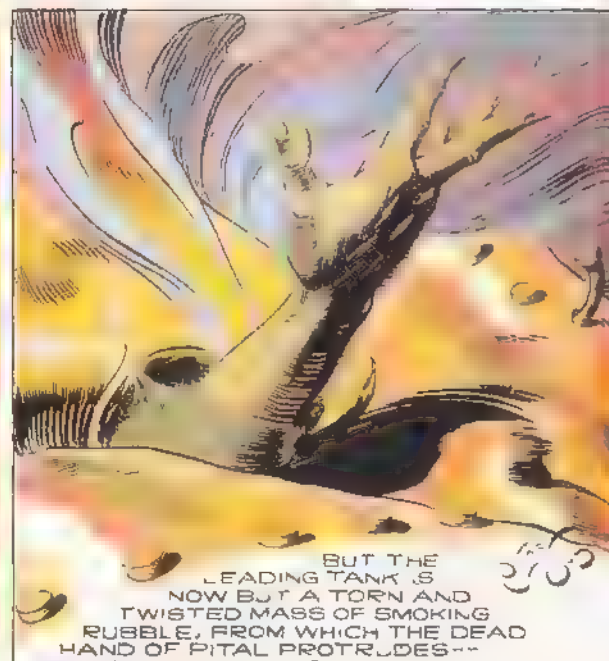


FLASH'S FREEMEN STAGGER AWAY FROM THE FORT'S MELTING WALLS—IT IS MORE THAN FLESH AND BLOOD CAN STAND—
 "THE MINES!" ROARS FLASH, "SET THEM OFF, ZARKOV!"

8 25 40.



THE GROUND BEFORE THE FORT LEAPS SKYWARD AS THE GREAT LAND MINES ARE TOUCHED OFF—MIRACULOUSLY, SOME OF MING'S TANKS LUNGE THROUGH THE HOLOCAUST—



BUT THE LEADING TANK IS NOW BUT A TORN AND TWISTED MASS OF SMOKING RUBBLE, FROM WHICH THE DEAD HAND OF PITAL PROTRUDES— CLUTCHING—AS IF STILL SEEKING A TRAITOR'S GOLD!

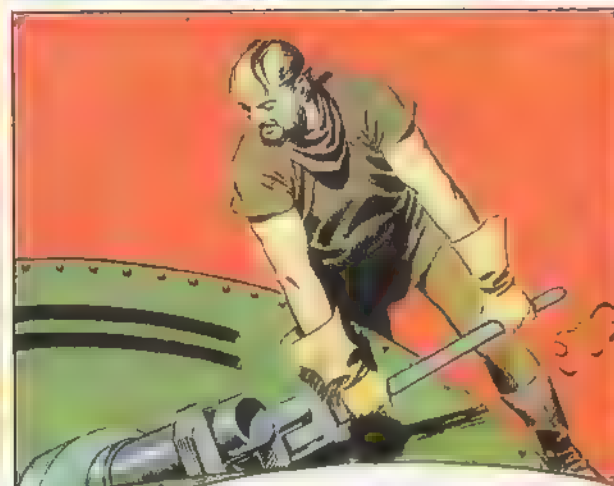
NEXT WEEK —
 THE DOOMED FORT



①
DESPITE
FLASH'S
HEROIC
RESISTANCE,
WAVE AFTER WAVE
OF MING'S TANKS
BLAST HIS FOR-
TRESS WITH RAY-
GUNS AND THERM-
ION-THROWERS.
THEN COMES THE
CROWNING BLOW
OF ALL—THE
ROCKET
BOMBERS!



AS THE
WALLS OF
THE FORT
MELT UNDER
THE TERRIBLE
WELTER OF
FLAME, FLASH
CALLS HIS MEN
AWAY FROM
THEIR GUNS—
"I'M PROUD OF
YOU," HE SHOUTS.
"BUT WE CAN'T
HOLD OUT! FOLLOW ERGON, THE
POWER MAN—HE'LL LEAD YOU
UNDERGROUND TO SAFETY!" ②



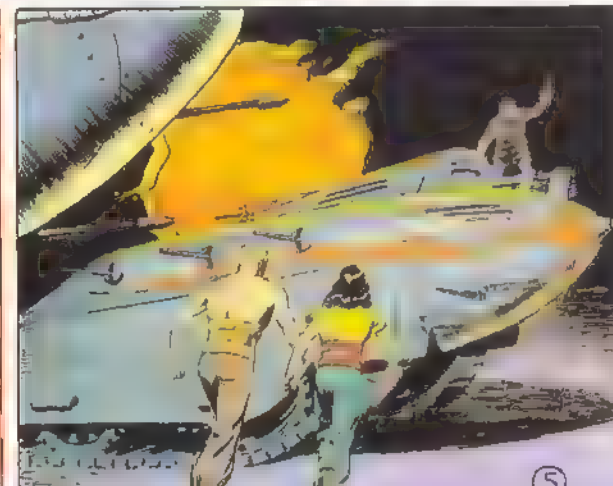
WHEN FLASH TURNED
MING'S MUNITION PLANT INTO A
FORTRESS, ZARKOV BUSIED HIM-
SELF IN THE LABORATORY. THERE
HE RAN ACROSS MING'S LATEST MILI-
TARY SECRET—AS YET UNDEVELOPED.
THE BRILLIANT SCIENTIST QUICKLY
COMPLETED THIS DEVICE. NOW, AS
THE BATTLE RAGES ABOUT HIM, HE
FEVERISHLY INSTALLS IT ON ONE OF
THE TANKS—

9-1-40.

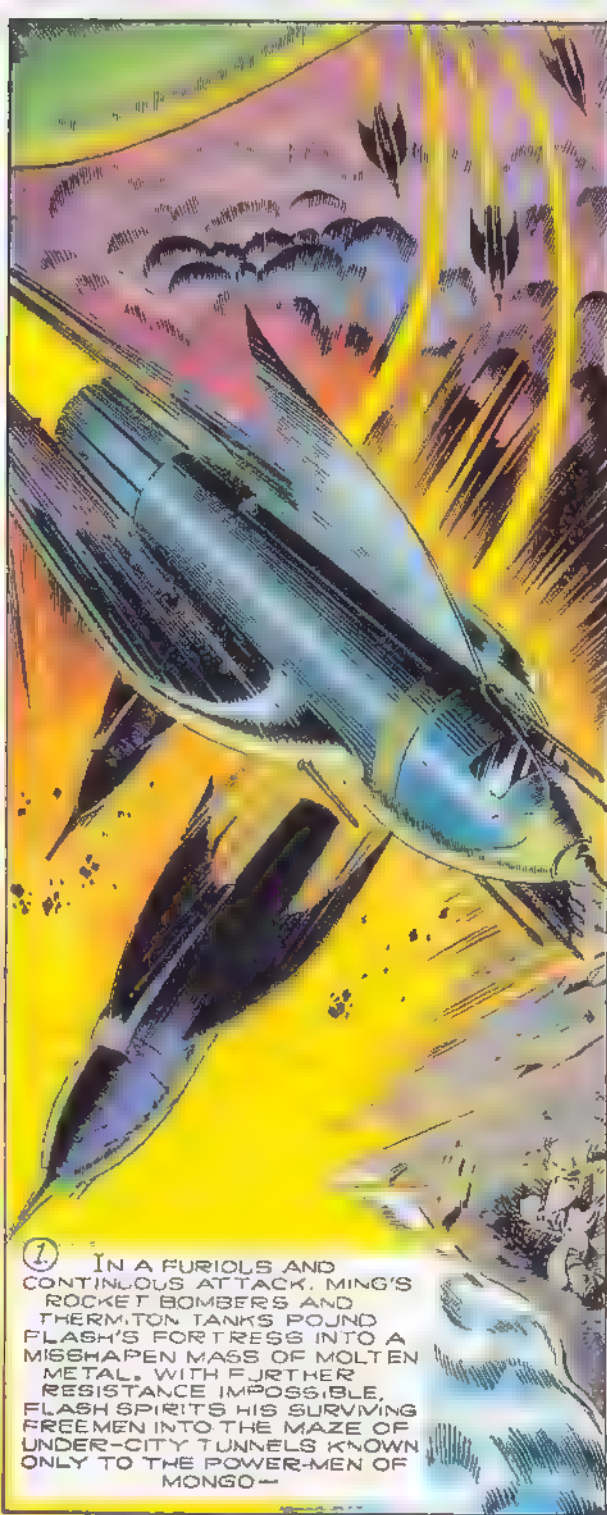
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FLASH
CLUTCHES
DALE TO
HIM AND SAYS, SADLY, "I'VE FAILED
AGAIN, DARLING—MING STILL HOLDS
THE CARDS. I WANT YOU TO GO WITH
ERGON—YOU'LL BE SAFE UNDER-
GROUND." "NO," ANSWERS DALE, "MY
PLACE IS WITH YOU—IN LIFE OR DEATH!" ③



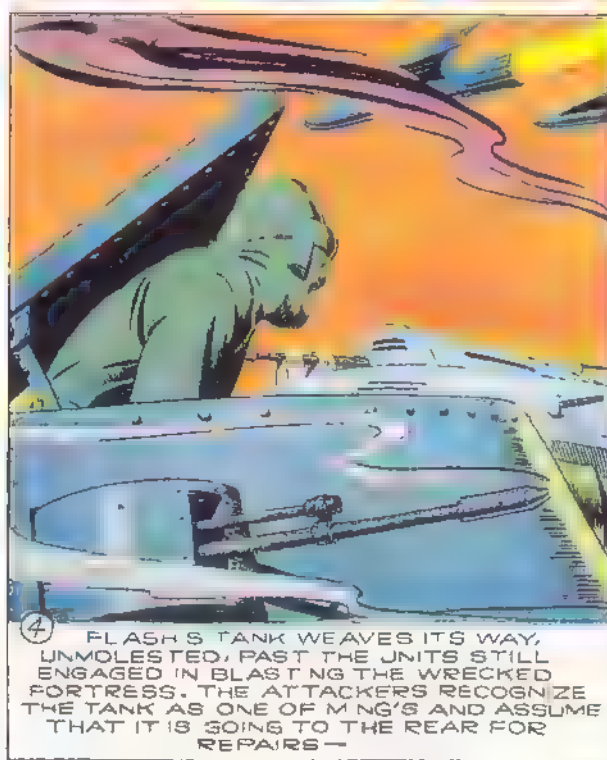
⑤
FINISHED
AT LAST,
HE IS ABOUT
TO SEEK OUT FLASH
AND DALE WHEN, TO
HIS GREAT RELIEF,
HE SEES THEM
RUNNING
TOWARD HIM.
NEXT WEEK!
THE AVENGER ~



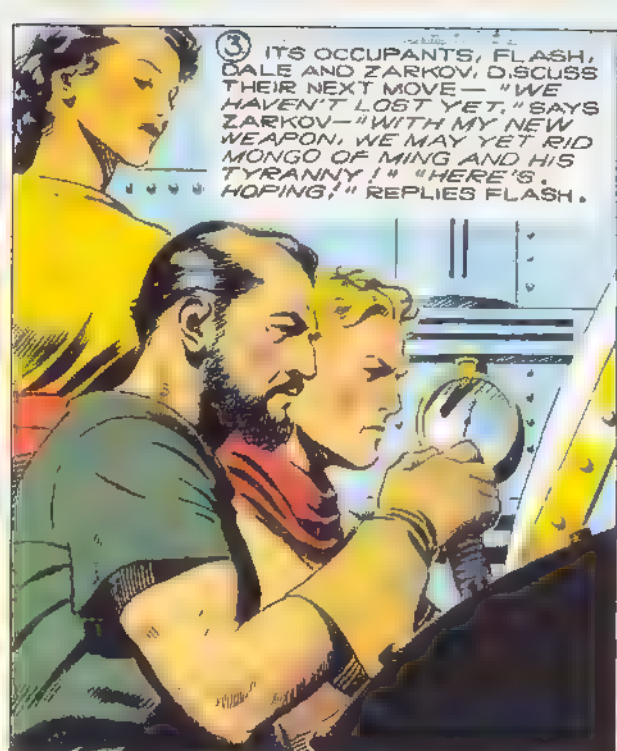
① IN A FURIOUS AND CONTINUOUS ATTACK, MING'S ROCKET BOMBERS AND THERMION TANKS POUND FLASH'S FORTRESS INTO A MISSEAPEN MASS OF MOLTEN METAL, WITH FURTHER RESISTANCE IMPOSSIBLE, FLASH SPIRITS HIS SURVIVING FREEMEN INTO THE MAZE OF UNDER-CITY TUNNELS KNOWN ONLY TO THE POWER-MEN OF MONGO—



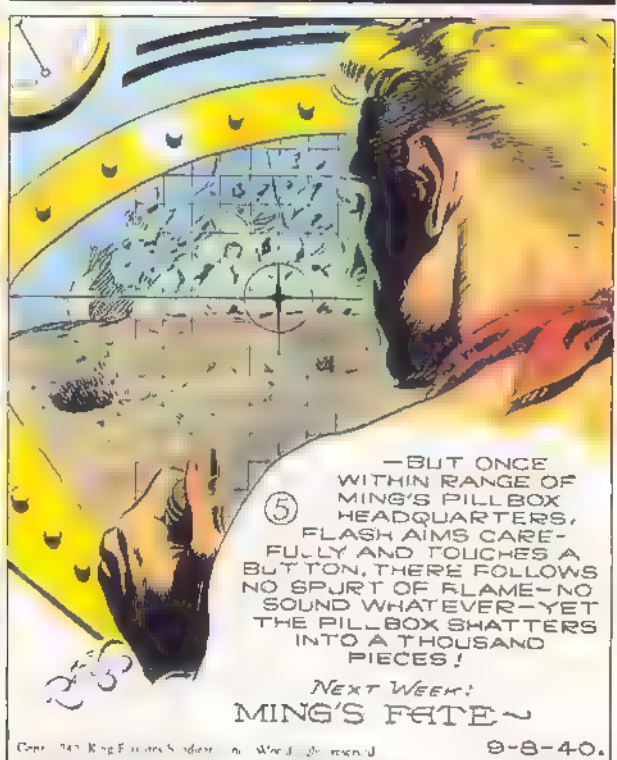
② AS THE GREAT DOMED STRUCTURE FINALLY CRUMPLES, A TANK EMERGES THROUGH THE GAPING REAR WALL—



④ FLASH'S TANK WEAVES ITS WAY, UNMOLESTED, PAST THE UNITS STILL ENGAGED IN BLASTING THE WRECKED FORTRESS. THE ATTACKERS RECOGNIZE THE TANK AS ONE OF MING'S AND ASSUME THAT IT IS GOING TO THE REAR FOR REPAIRS—



③ ITS OCCUPANTS, FLASH, DALE AND ZARKOV, DISCUSS THEIR NEXT MOVE— "WE HAVEN'T LOST YET," SAYS ZARKOV— "WITH MY NEW WEAPON, WE MAY YET RID MONGO OF MING AND HIS TYRANNY!" "HERE'S HOPING," REPLIES FLASH.



—BUT ONCE WITHIN RANGE OF MING'S PILLBOX HEADQUARTERS, FLASH AIMS CAREFULLY AND TOUCHES A BUTTON, THERE FOLLOWS NO SPURT OF FLAME—NO SOUND WHATEVER—YET THE PILLBOX SHATTERS INTO A THOUSAND PIECES!

⑤

NEXT WEEK:
MING'S FATE~

FLASH, DALE AND ZARKOV ESCAPE FROM THE RUINED FORTRESS IN A CAPTURED TANK. THEY ATTACK MING'S HEADQUARTERS AND ZARKOV'S SECRET WEAPON REDUCES THE STRUCTURE TO RUINS.



BUT MING, A FEW SECONDS BEFORE, HAD LEFT HIS PILLBOX FOR AN OBSERVATION FLIGHT. JUST AS HE IS ABOUT TO ENTER HIS ROCKET SHIP, AN OFFICER CRIES OUT—"LOOK, EXCELLENCY! OUR HEADQUARTERS—"



THE CRUEL, BUT CANNY TYRANT IS QUICK TO SIZE UP THE SITUATION—"THAT TANK," HE SNAPS, "IT'S ACTING SUSPICIOUS! INTO THE SHIP—QUICK!"



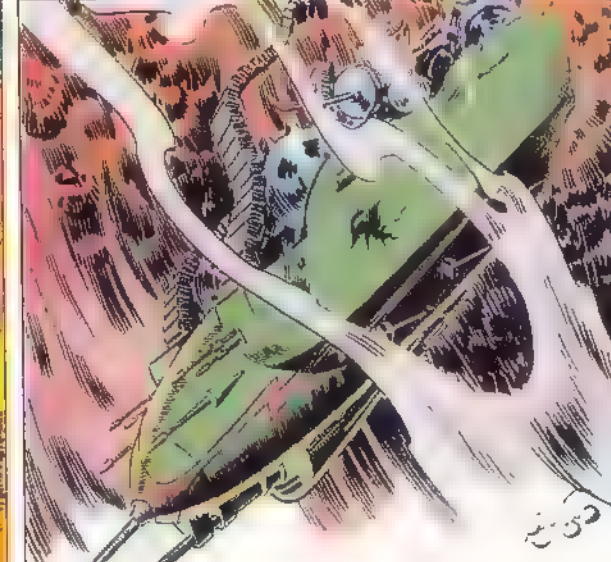
"A SOUND GUN," ANSWERS ZARKOV, "SOUND—PITCHED SO HIGH THAT THE HUMAN EAR CANNOT DETECT IT! CONCENTRATED TO SUCH A FORCE THAT NOTHING CAN WITHSTAND IT!"



AS MING'S SHIP ROARS INTO THE SKY, HE SHOUTS INTO A MICROPHONE—"COMMANDERS—ATTENTION TO ORDERS! FOLLOW THE EMPEROR'S FLAGSHIP! BOMBING FORMATION!"

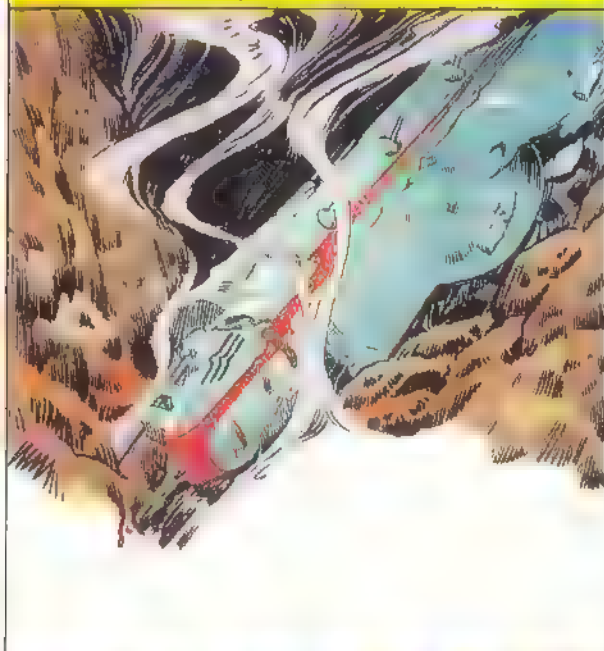


UNDER MING'S LEADERSHIP, THE ROCKET SHIPS FORMERLY ENGAGED IN BOMBING FLASH'S FORT, NOW VENT THEIR FULL FURY ON HIS DODGING, TWISTING TANK, AS HE DESPERATELY SEEKS COVER—

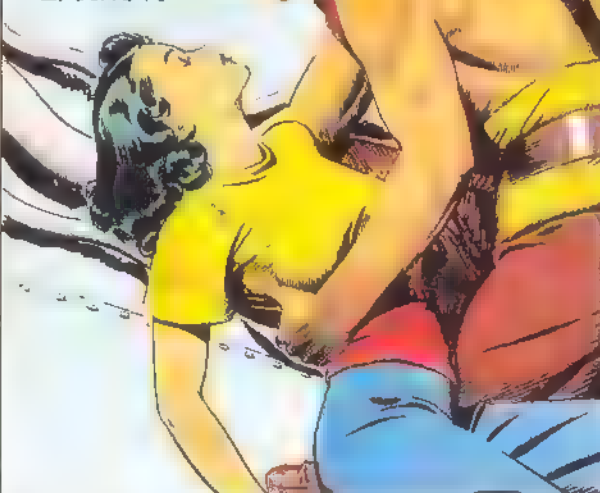


THE VERY GROUND HEAVES UNDER THE IMPACT OF THE HIGH EXPLOSIVES. FLASH'S TANK HURTTLES END OVER END INTO A HUGE CRATER BEFORE ZARKOV CAN CHECK ITS HEADLONG FLIGHT! 9-15-40. NEXT WEEK: AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CRATER—

MING'S BOMBERS, LED BY THE EMPEROR HIMSELF, BOMB FLASH'S TANK AFTER IT HAD DESTROYED MING'S HEADQUARTERS —



INSIDE THE TANK, FLASH FINDS THAT, ALTHOUGH UNCONSCIOUS, DALE IS NOT BADLY HURT — "THANK HEAVEN!" HE WHISPERS. "AMEN!" MUTTERS ZARKOV.



WITH A CHEMI-TORCH, FLASH AND ZARKOV BLAST OPEN THE JAMMED HATCH DOOR AND EMERGE FROM THE TANK —



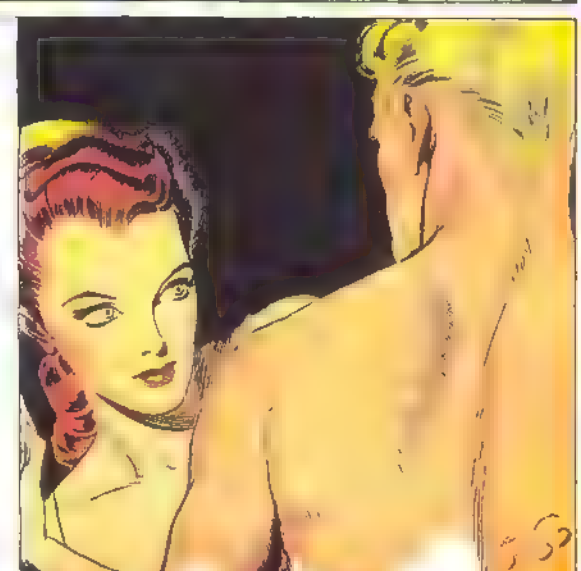
FLASH STARES — AND THEN SHOUTS — "LOOK, ZARKOV! A TUNNEL! THIS CRATER STOVE IN THE ROOF OF AN UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY!"



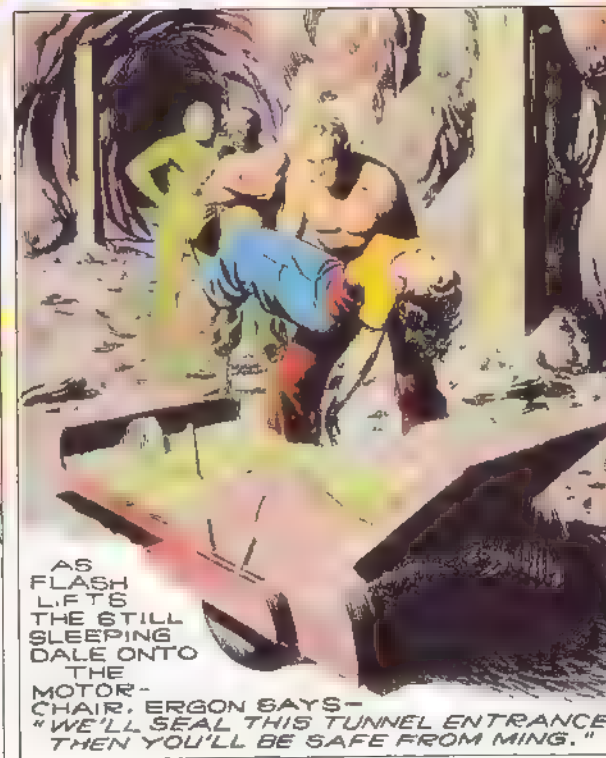
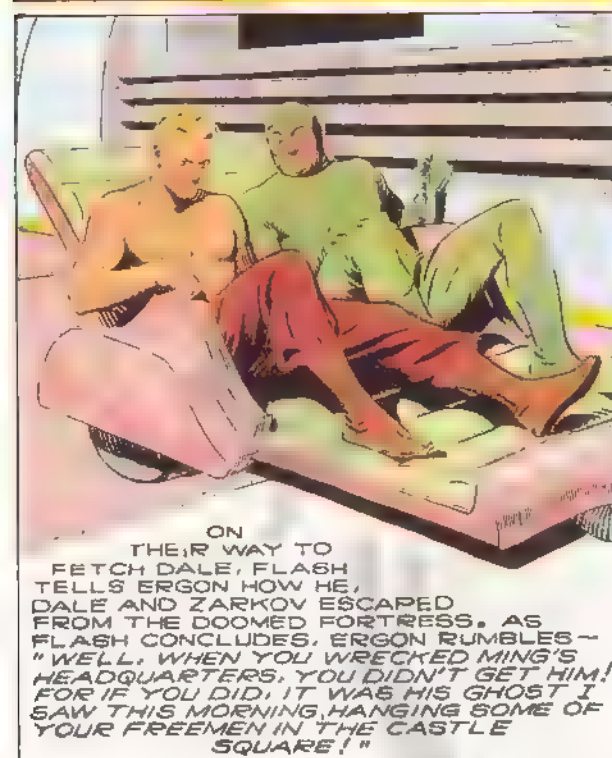
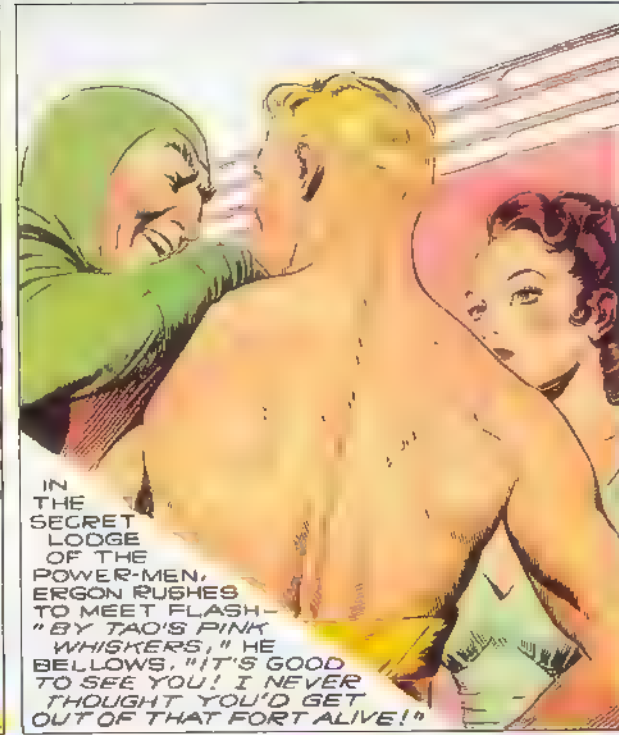
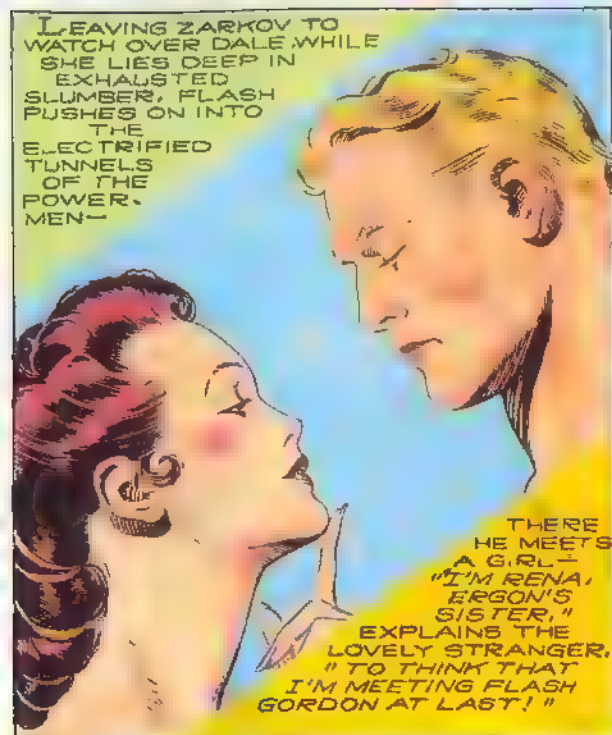
DEEP IN THE GLOOMY PASSAGEWAY, FLASH AND ZARKOV REVIVE DALE — BUT SHE IMMEDIATELY FALLS INTO A DEEP SLEEP — "POOR KID," SAYS FLASH, "SHE'S TIRED OUT — LET HER SLEEP. WATCH OVER HER, ZARKOV — I'LL GO AHEAD AND SEE WHERE THIS TUNNEL LEADS."



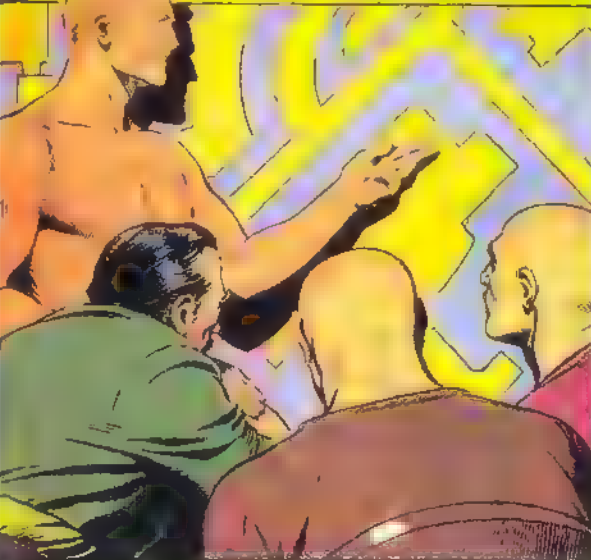
FLASH IS PLEASED TO DISCOVER THAT THE TUNNEL LEADS INTO THE COMPLICATED UNDERGROUND SYSTEM WHICH CARRIES POWER-LINES TO ALL SECTIONS OF THE GREAT ELECTRIFIED CITY OF MINGO — "AH," HE CHUCKLES, "NOW, IF I CAN ONLY LOCATE ERGON AND HIS POWER MEN —"



"YOU CAN," SAYS A MUSICAL VOICE. FLASH WHIRLS — AND A VISION OF UNUSUAL LOVELINESS MEETS HIS EYE! NEXT WEEK: RENAI



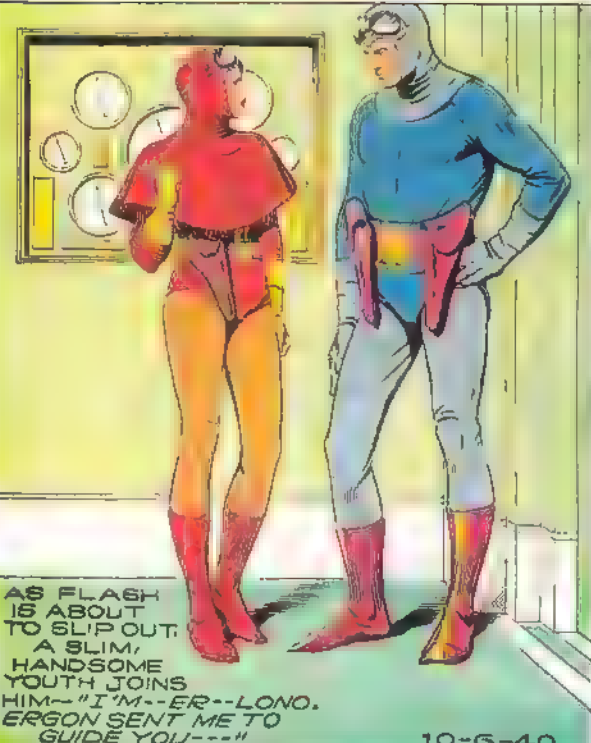
DEEP IN THE HIDDEN HAUNTS OF THE POWER MEN, FLASH, ZARKOV, BULON AND ERGON HOLD A COUNCIL OF WAR—
 "IF WE'RE TO FREE MONGO OF MING'S BLOODY GRASP," SAYS FLASH, "WE CAN'T LET UP—WE MUST KEEP STRIKING AT HIS VITAL POINTS! OUR NEXT MOVE SHOULD BE AGAINST HIS CHEMICAL-RAY FACTORY!"



TO DALE'S DISMAY, FLASH INSISTS ON THE MOST DANGEROUS TASK: SCOUTING THE PLANT FOR THE RAD—"IF YOU'RE DETERMINED TO GET KILLED," SHE SAYS, "YOU COULD AT LEAST LET ME GO WITH YOU!"
 "I'D RATHER YOU'D WAIT HERE FOR ME, DARLING," REPLIES FLASH, "THEN NOTHING CAN PREVENT MY RETURNING!"

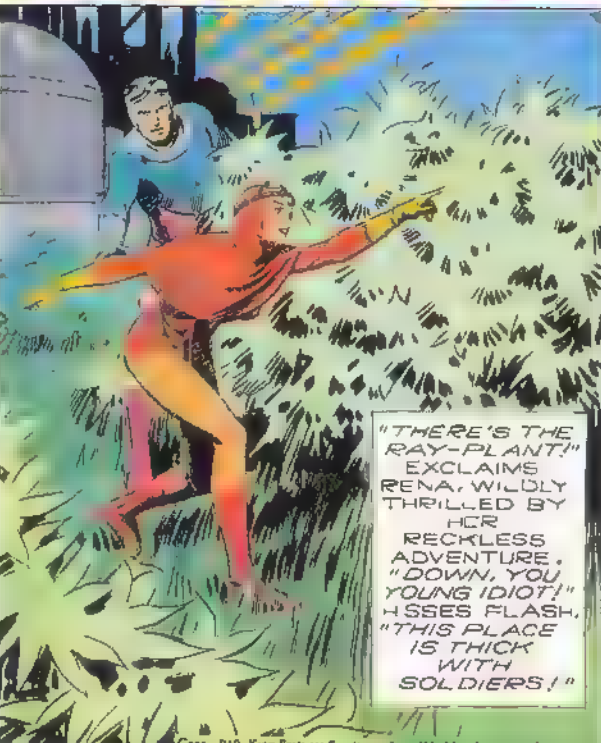


RENA, ALWAYS DARING, PLANS TO DISGUISE HERSELF, TO BE NEARER TO HER HERO, FLASH GORDON.



AS FLASH IS ABOUT TO SLIP OUT, A SLIM, HANDSOME YOUTH JOINS HIM—"I'M--ER--LONO. ERGON SENT ME TO GUIDE YOU---"

10-6-40.



"THERE'S THE RAY-PLANT!" EXCLAIMS RENA, WILDLY THRILLED BY HER RECKLESS ADVENTURE.
 "DOWN, YOU YOUNG IDIOT!" HISSES FLASH.
 "THIS PLACE IS THICK WITH SOLDIERS!"

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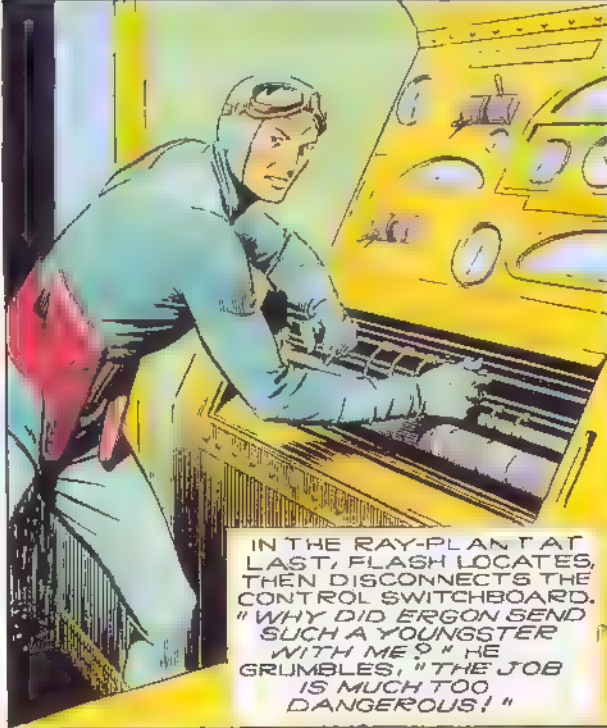
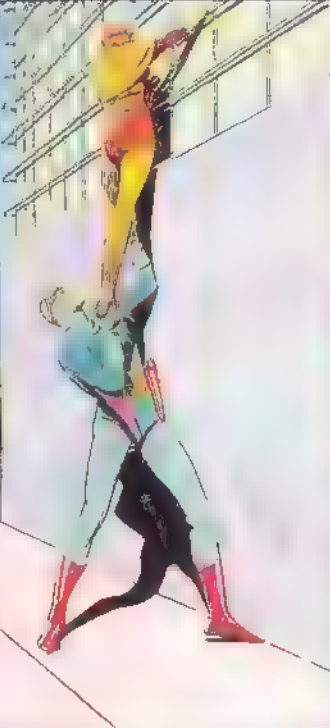


MEANWHILE, BULON DISCOVERS RENA'S DISAPPEARANCE—"BY TAO," HE RUMBLES, "I THINK SHE'S RUN OFF WITH THAT FLASH GORDON!"

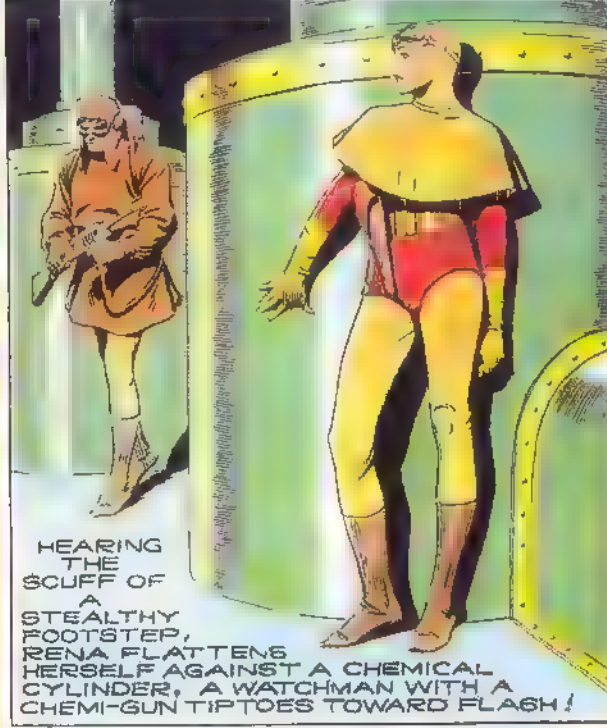
"NONSENSE!" DALE RETORTS ANGRILY, "SHE MIGHT LOSE HER HEAD OVER FLASH, BUT HE'D NEVER TAKE HER WITH HIM!"
 "JUST THE SAME," BULON GROWLS, "I'M GOING TO MAKE SURE!"

NEXT WEEK
 THE ACID TEST

FLASH AND LONO:
STEALTHILY
WORK THEIR WAY
INTO MING'S
CHEMICAL-RAY
FACTORY.
FLASH IS
UNWARE THAT
HIS YOUNG GUIDE
IS ERGON'S
SISTER, RENA,
IN DIS-
GUISE.



IN THE RAY-PLANT AT
LAST, FLASH LOCATES
THEN DISCONNECTS THE
CONTROL SWITCHBOARD.
"WHY DID ERGON SEND
SUCH A YOUNGSTER
WITH ME?" HE
GRUMBLES, "THE JOB
IS MUCH TOO
DANGEROUS!"

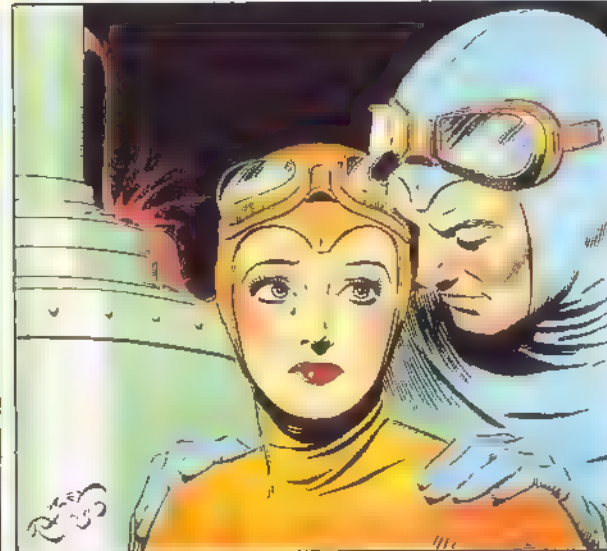


HEARING
THE
SCUFF OF
A
STEALTHY
FOOTSTEP,
RENA FLATTENS
HERSELF AGAINST A CHEMICAL
CYLINDER, A WATCHMAN WITH A
CHEMI-GUN TIPTOES TOWARD FLASH!

RENA LEAPS AT THE MAN,
SCREAMING—"FLASH!
FLASH! HE'S GOING
TO KILL YOU!"



FLASH'S PISTOL BUTT DROPS THE
SURPRISED WATCHMAN BEFORE HE CAN
SHAKE OFF THE SCREAMING, CLAWING
GIRL—"A WILDCAT, AREN'T YOU,
LONO?" SAYS FLASH. "YOU SHOULD
USE YOUR FISTS, OR YOUR WEAPONS,
NOT YOUR FINGERNAILS!"



"TURN OFF THE TEARS, SON," SOOTHES
FLASH, "IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW. FIRST
TIME YOU WERE EVER IN A TIGHT
SPOT?" "NO, BUT I WAS SO AFRAID
HE'D HURT YOU," SOBS RENA. NEITHER
NOTICES THAT THE WATCHMAN'S
ACCIDENTALLY DISCHARGED GUN HAS
DAMAGED A PIPE FROM WHICH STREAMS
A DEADLY
CHEMICAL!

NEXT WEEK:
BATH OF FIRE

WHEN FLASH SUBDUED A WATCHMAN IN MING'S CHEMICAL-RAY FACTORY, THE MAN'S GUN WAS ACCIDENTALLY DISCHARGED, DAMAGING A GREAT TANK. THE RELEASED CHEMICAL FLUID MIXING WITH AIR, BURSTS INTO FLAME —



THERE FOLLOWS A BLINDING SHEET OF FLAME — A MUFFLED ROAR — THE BURNING LIQUID IS SPRAYED OVER A WIDE AREA
"HELP!" SCREAMS "LONO,"
"IT'S BURNING ME!"



FIERCELY, FLASH RIPS THE CHEMICAL-SOAKED HOOD OFF HIS YOUNG COMRADE —



RENA'S COPPERY HAIR SHIMMERS IN THE DIM LIGHT. FLASH STARES, AND THEN SAYS, "IT'S A GIRL! RENA, ERGON'S SISTER! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN... YOU WERE TOO GRACEFUL FOR A BOY!"



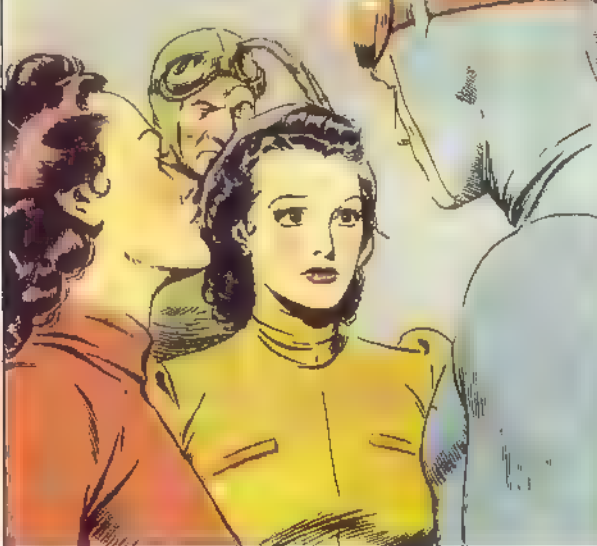
RENA SWAYS TOWARD FLASH — CLINGS TO HIM — "I HAD TO BE WITH YOU, FLASH," SHE WHISPERS, "I COULDN'T LET YOU GO INTO DANGER ALONE... KISS ME — TELL ME YOU FORGIVE ME!"



UNKNOWN TO FLASH AND RENA, TWO OTHERS HAVE ALSO ENTERED THE CHEMICAL-RAY PLANT — AND JUST IN TIME TO WITNESS THIS TENDER SCENE... DALE AND BULON!
NEXT WEEK!
10-20-40.

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BULON, RENA'S JEALOUS FIANCE, ACCOMPANIED BY DALE, TRA LS HIS SWEETHEART TO MING'S RAY-FACTORY—"OH, FLASH!" DALE GASPS, "HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME?" "HA!" SNARLS BULON, "I KNEW I'D FIND HER HERE WITH YOU—YOU WOMAN-STEALER!"



FLASH TURNS HIS BACK ON BLLON, IGNOR NG HIM COMPLETELY, AND SAYS TO DALE—"BUT SHE WAS DISGUISED AS A BOY! DALE—I SWEAR I DIDN'T KNOW WHO SHE WAS!" "HOW CAN I BELIEVE THAT?" ANSWERS DALE, BITTERLY.



THE QUARRELING FOURSOME FAILS TO NOTICE A SHADOWY GROUP STEALING ACROSS A BALCONY WHICH LEADS TO THE FLOOR OF THE FACTORY—



—SUDDENLY, DALE LOOKS UP AND SCREAMS—"OH, FLASH, DARLING! LOOK OUT! MING'S SOLDIERS!"

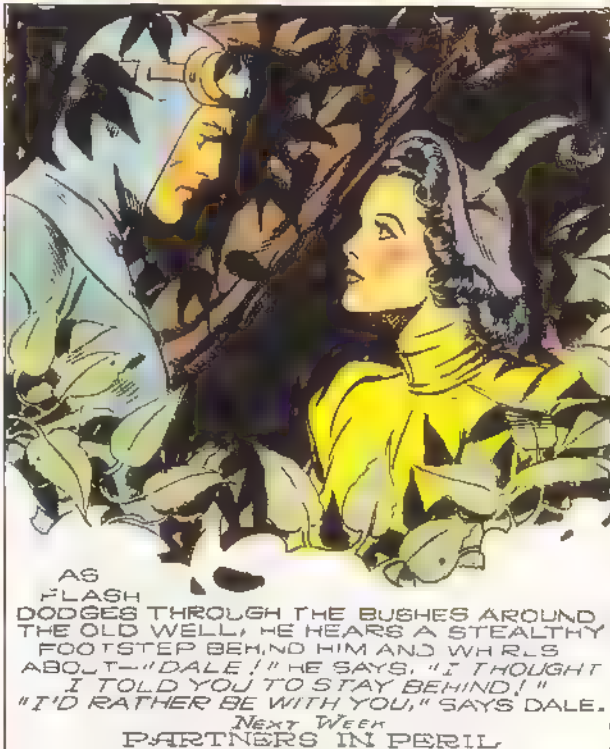


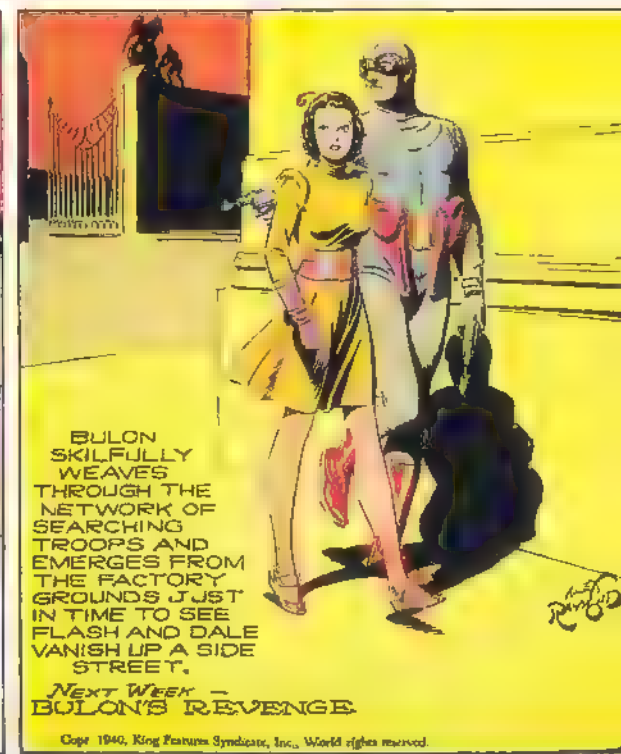
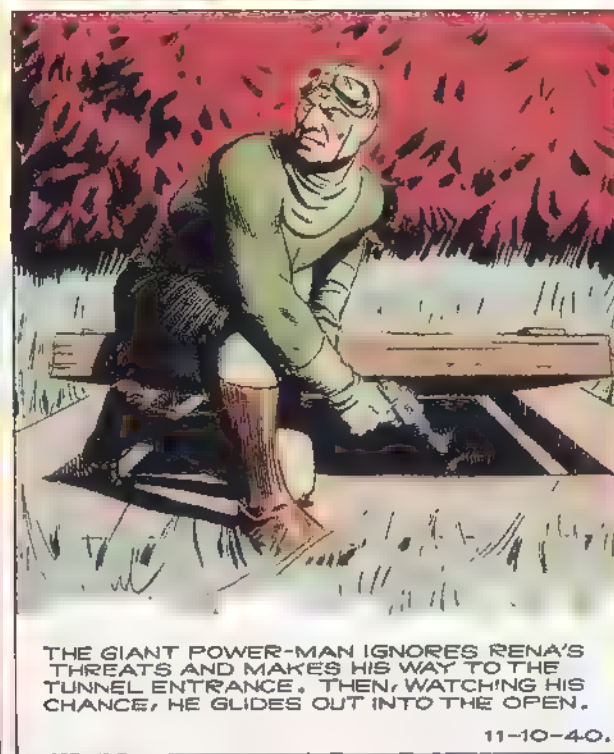
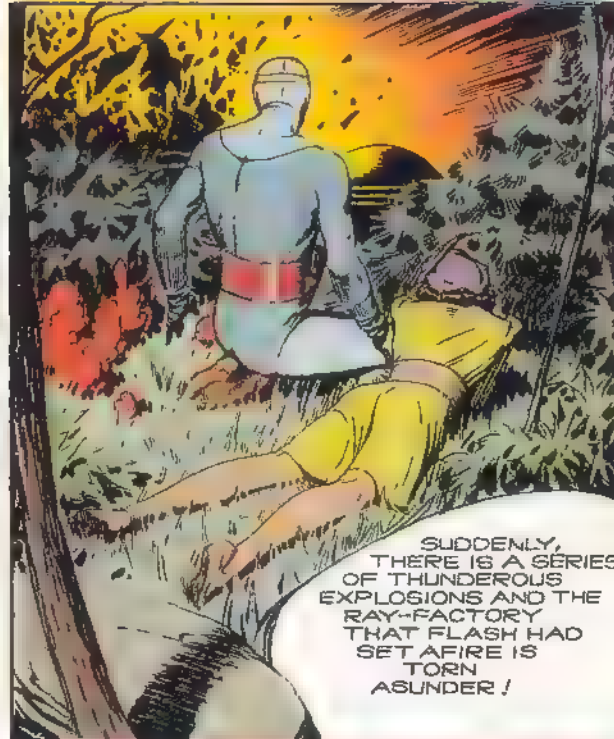
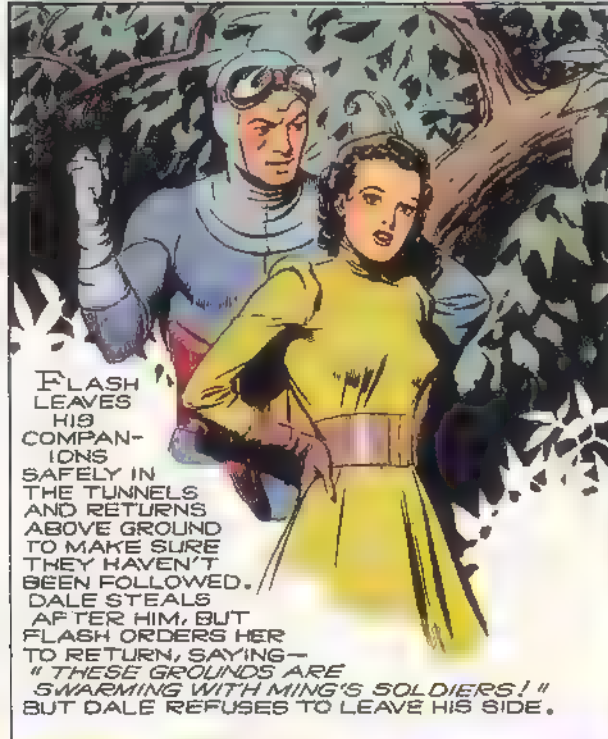
FLASH SHOVS THE OTHERS INTO A DOORWAY— THEN, IGNORING THE SOLDIERS' FIRE, DASHES ACROSS THE FACTORY FLOOR, BLASTING HOLES IN THE GREAT CHEMICAL TANKS— 10-27-40.

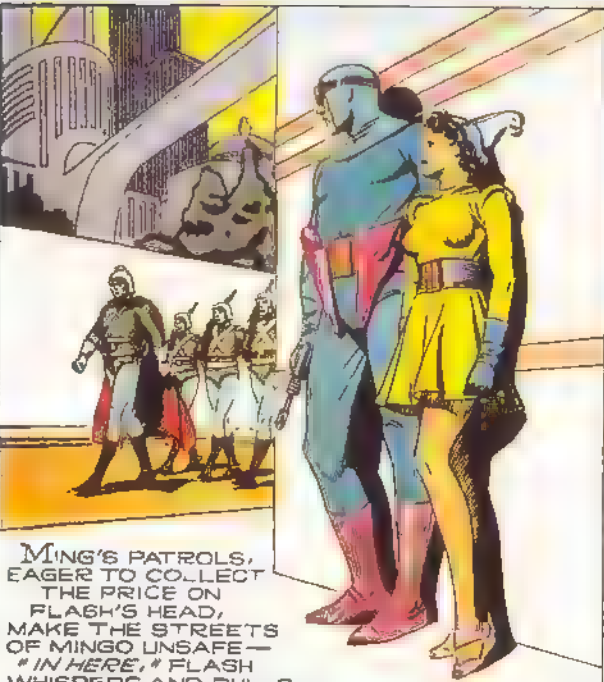


—THE SOLDIERS STAGGER BACK, AS THE RELEASED CHEMICALS EXPLODE WITH A SERIES OF DEAFEN NG ROARS!

NEXT WEEK:
RUNNING THE GYNTLET







MING'S PATROLS, EAGER TO COLLECT THE PRICE ON FLASH'S HEAD, MAKE THE STREETS OF MINGO UNSAFE — "IN HERE," FLASH WHISPERS AND PULLS DALE INTO A DOORWAY.



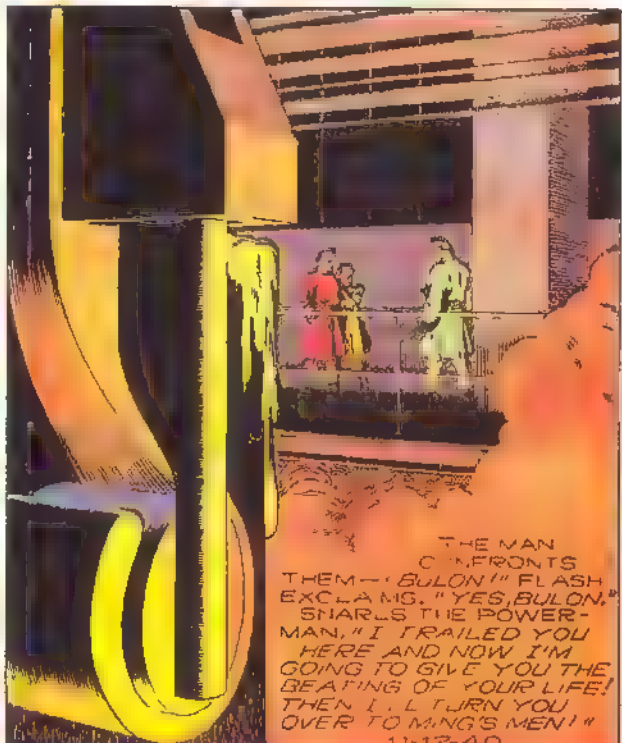
AS THEY CONTINUE ON INTO THE BUILDING, THEY ARE MET BY A BLAST OF INTENSE HEAT — "HM-M," SAYS FLASH, "AN ARMOR PLANT—"



IN A SIDE ROOM, FLASH HELPS DALE INTO A WORKMAN'S SMOCK, SAYING, "THIS WON'T DO MUCH FOR YOUR BEAUTY, DARLING, BUT IT WILL DISGUISE YOU TO SOME EXTENT."



"WATCH OUT, FLASH!" WARNS DALE, "A MAN JUST DUCKED BEHIND THAT PILLAR OVER THERE!" "I SAW HIM," ANSWERS FLASH, "PROBABLY AN INSPECTOR—DON'T NOTICE HIM—ACT AS IF YOU BELONGED HERE."



THE MAN CONFRONTS THEM — "BULON!" FLASH EXCLAIMS. "YES, BULON," SNARLS THE POWER-MAN, "I TRAILED YOU HERE AND NOW I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU THE BEATING OF YOUR LIFE! THEN I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO MING'S MEN!"



BULON POKETS HIS GUN AND ADVANCES TOWARD FLASH. REALIZING THE USELESSNESS OF ARGUMENT, FLASH HURLS HIMSELF AT THE JEALOUS AND VENGEFUL POWER-MAN.

NEXT WEEK, THE FIGHT

FLASH AND DALE, HUNTED BY MING'S SOLDIERS, TAKE REFUGE IN ONE OF MING'S GREAT STEELITE ARMOR MILLS. BUT BULON, BURNING WITH JEALOUSY AND VENGEANCE, FOLLOWS THEM AND ENGAGES FLASH IN A FINISH FIGHT—

DALE CRINGES, AS BULON RESORTS TO THE FOUL TACTICS OF KICKING AND GOUGING—

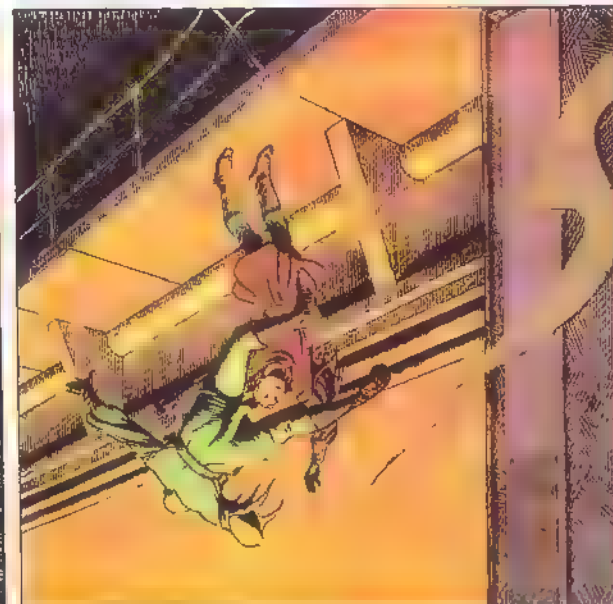


—THE GIANT POWER-MAN HURLS FLASH AGAINST THE WALL WITH A VICIOUS KICK TO THE BODY—

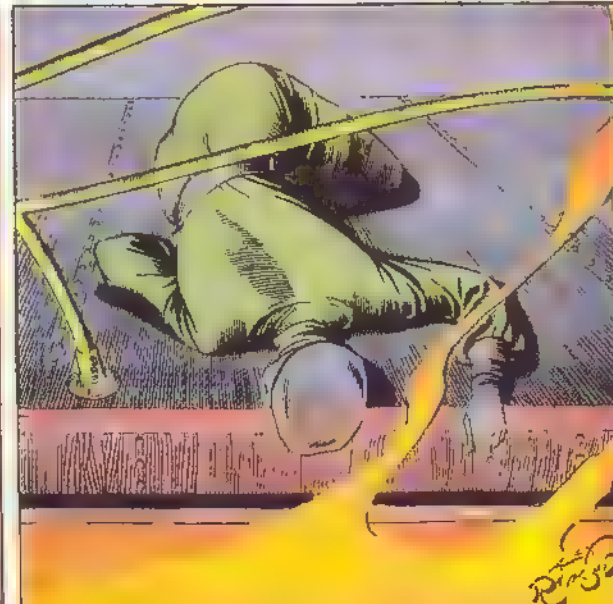
—BUT FLASH BOUNDS OFF THE WALL AND AT BULON WITH THE FEROCITY OF A TIGER. AS FLASH'S CRUSHING FISTS BEAT A MURDEROUS TATTOO ON HIS HEAD AND TORSO—



—REELING, BULON SUMMONS ALL HIS REMAINING STRENGTH AND, LOCKING FLASH WITH HIS BEAR-LIKE ARMS, SEEKS TO WHIRL HIM OVER THE GUARD RAIL—



—HE SUCCEEDS! BUT FLASH'S GRIP ON THE MIGHTY POWER-MAN DRAGS HIM OVER THE RAIL AND, TOGETHER, THEY HURTLE DOWNWARD TOWARD THE VATS OF WHITE-HOT, MOLTEN METAL!



DALE'S TERRIFIED SCREAM ENDS IN A LOW MOAN, AS SHE COLLAPSES IN A DEAD FAINT.

11-24-40.

NEXT WEEK:
FATE'S TRICK

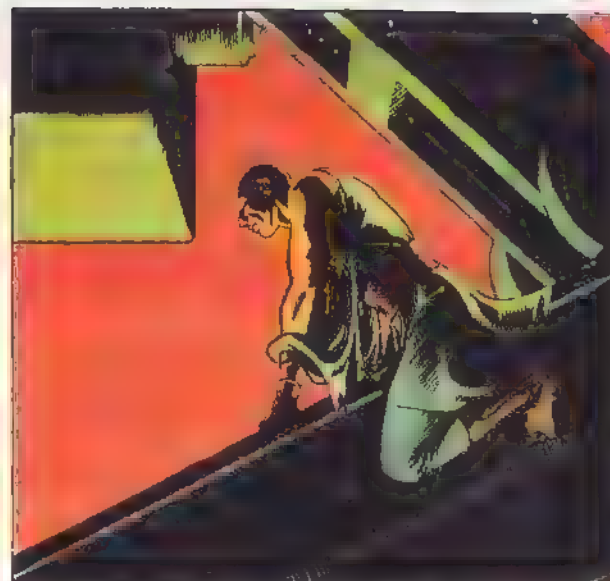
WHILE ENGAGED IN A FIERCE GRUDGE FIGHT
IN A STEELITE MILL, FLASH AND BULON
TOPPLE OVER A GUARD-RAIL TOWARD
VATS OF WHITE-HOT METAL —



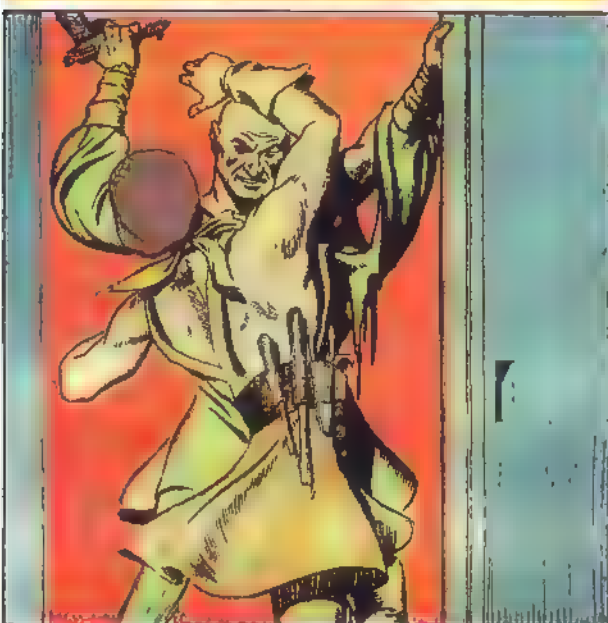
—BUT, AT THAT MOMENT, A GREAT SLAG
CRANE SWINGS OVER THE BUBBLING VATS
AND FLASH AND BULON LAND IN ITS HUGE
SCOOP WITH STUNNING FORCE —



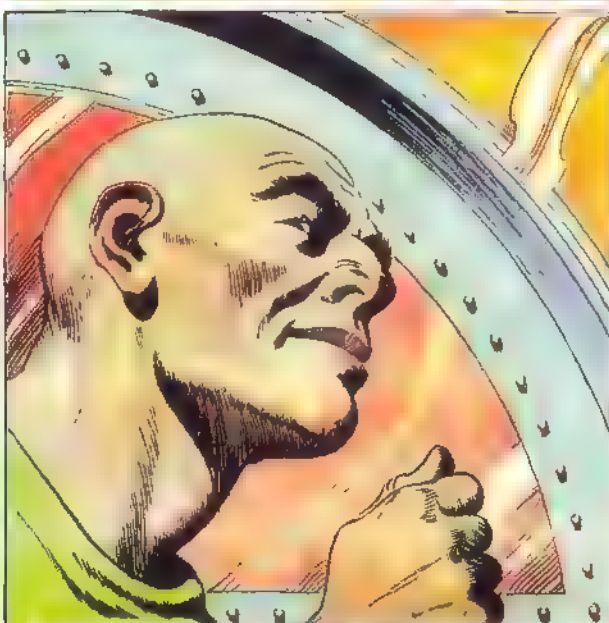
BULON, DAZED AND
BATTERED,
STRUGGLES TO HIS
FEET. FLASH FAILS TO
MOVE—KNOCKED COLD BY
THE FALL. A SINISTER LIGHT
FLARES IN BULON'S EYES—



THE GIANT POWER-MAN CLIMBS TO THE
GREAT CRANE AND WORKS HIS WAY
TOWARD THE OPERATOR'S CAB. THE
OPERATOR SLOWLY SWINGS THE CRANE
AWAY FROM THE VATS TO SAVE BULON
FROM A FIERY DEATH SHOULD HE FALL—



"WELL DONE!" CRIES THE OPERATOR,
AS HE HELPS BULON INTO HIS CAB—
"LUCKY I SAW YOU FALL! I—"
BULON CUTS THE MAN SHORT WITH A
HEAVY BLOW ON THE HEAD FROM THE
BUTT OF HIS GUN—



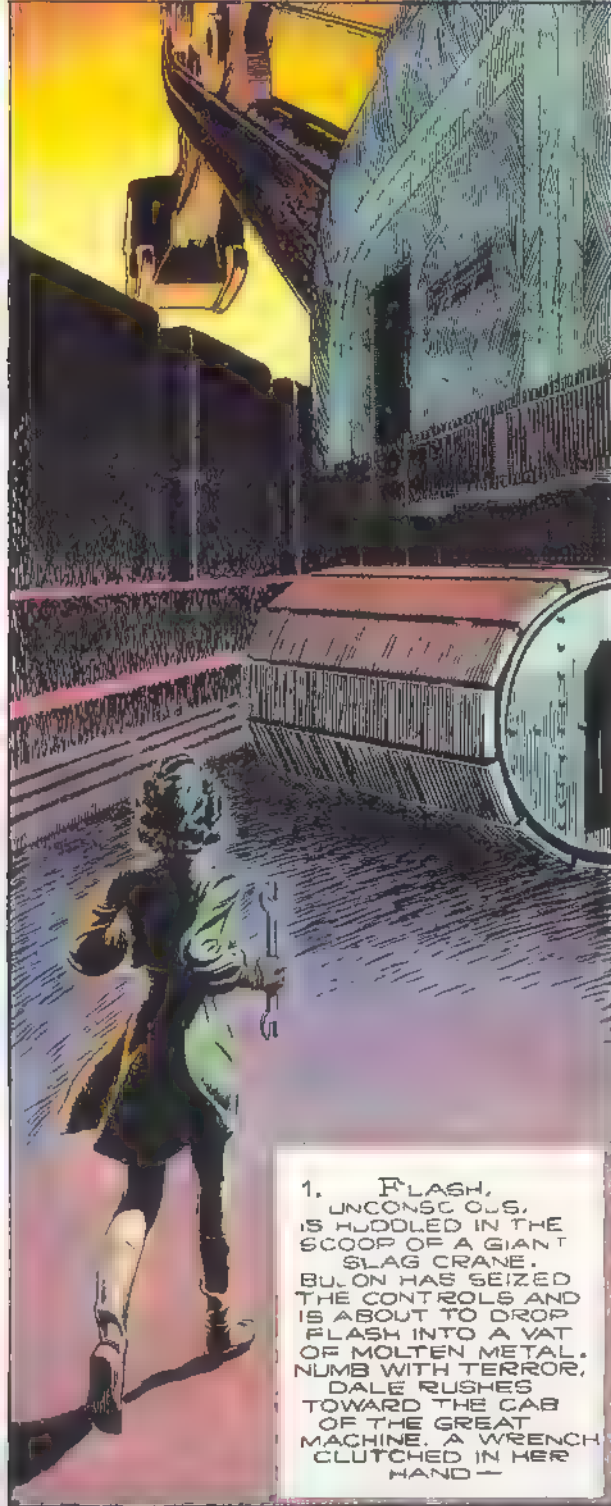
AFTER MAKING SURE THAT THE
OPERATOR IS QUITE UNCONSCIOUS,
BULON SEATS HIMSELF AT THE
CONTROLS —"NOW!" HE GLOATS,
"NOW, FLASH GORDON, IT'S
MY TURN!"



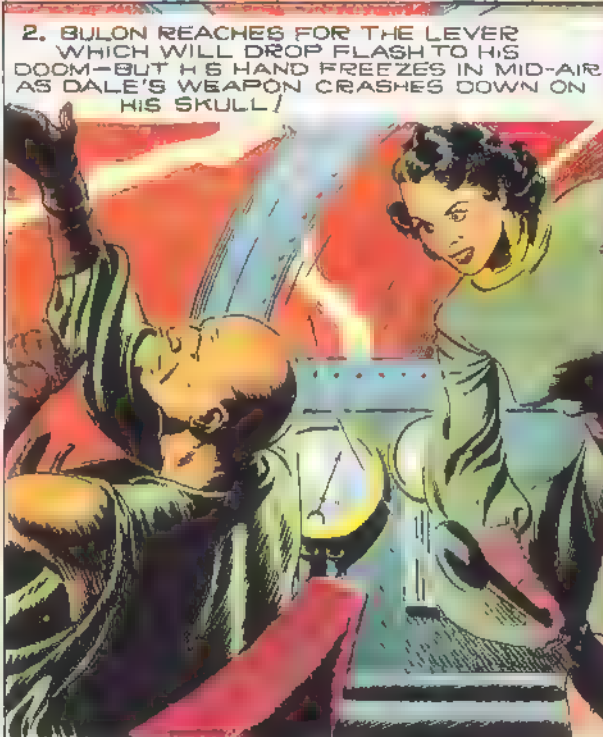
UP ON THE CATWALK,
DALE ROUSES FROM
HER FAINT. SHE
GASHES AS, BELOW
HER, SHE SEES THE
SCOOP CONTAINING
FLASH'S BODY
SWING OUT TOWARD
THE BOILING VATS!

NEXT WEEK:
MING'S
TROUBLE-
SHOOTERS

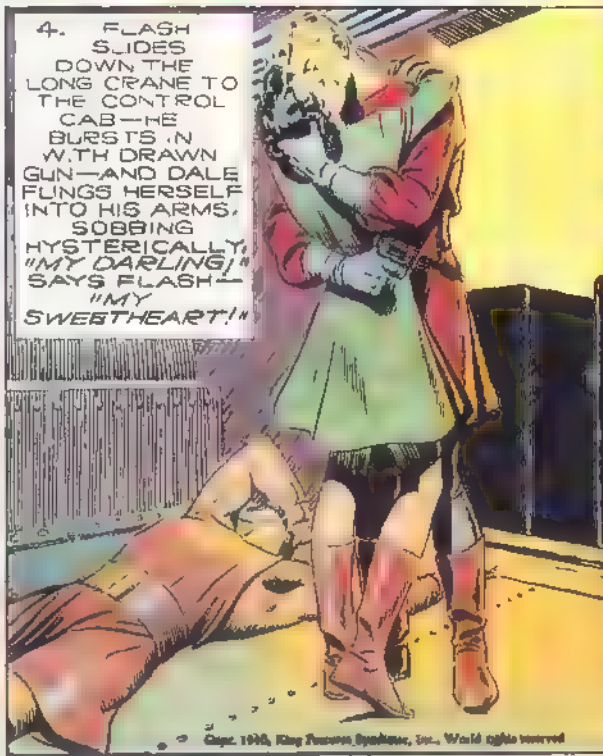
12-1-40.



1. FLASH, UNCONSCIOUS, IS HUDDLED IN THE SCOOP OF A GIANT SLAG CRANE. BULON HAS SEIZED THE CONTROLS AND IS ABOUT TO DROP FLASH INTO A VAT OF MOLTEN METAL. DALE RUSHES TOWARD THE CAB OF THE GREAT MACHINE. A WRENCH CLUTCHED IN HER HAND—



4. FLASH SLIDES DOWN THE LONG CRANE TO THE CONTROL CAB—HE BURSTS IN WITH DRAWN GUN—AND DALE FLINGS HERSELF INTO HIS ARMS, SOBBING HYSTERICALLY, "MY DARLING!" SAYS FLASH—"MY SWEETHEART!"



3. THE FERCE HEAT FROM THE VATS BENEATH HIM SHU-KS FLASH INTO CONSCIOUSNESS—HE THEN SCRAMBLES OUT OF THE GREAT SCOOP—



5. MEANWHILE, IN THE ARMOR MILL HEADQUARTERS, MING'S TROUBLE-SHOOTERS GET WARNING SIGNALS—"CRANE B-3 IS ACTING UP—GET OUT AND SEE WHAT'S WRONG!"

NEXT WEEK
THE METAL MONSTER
12-8-40.

IBULON'S ATTEMPT TO DROP FLASH FROM THE SCOOP OF A GIANT CRANE INTO A VAT OF MOLTEN METAL WAS THWARTED BY DALE. THE UNUSUAL CONDUCT OF THE CRANE RELAYS AN AUTOMATIC WARNING TO MING'S TROUBLE-SHOOTERS—

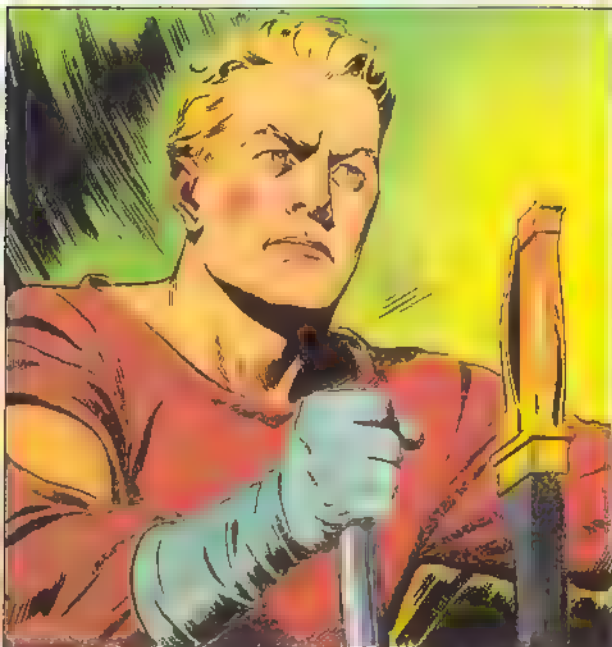
AS THE BRUTAL, WELL-ARMED MEN SWAGGER THROUGH THE HUGE ARMOR MILL, THE WORKERS CRINGE IN FEAR—



FLASH IS ABOUT TO ASSIST DALE FROM THE CRANE CAB WHEN SHE SCREAMS A WARNING AND A RAY-BOLT MISSES FLASH'S HEAD BY INCHES—



FLASH LEAPS BACK INTO THE CAB AND SLAMS THE HEAVY DOOR—"THEY'VE RECOGNIZED US!" HE SAYS, "STAY CLOSE TO THE FLOOR, DALE—WE'VE GOT TO FIGHT OUR WAY OUT OF THIS!"



FLASH GRABS THE CONTROLS AND SETS THE PONDEROUS MACHINE IN MOTION. HE SWEEPS A SCOOPFUL OF MOLTEN METAL FROM A NEARBY VAT—



THE TROUBLE-SHOOTERS SCATTER IN PANIC AS THE FLAMING SCOOP SWINGS OVER THEM—



FROM HIS OBSERVATION POST, THE OFFICER IN COMMAND RUTHLESSLY ORDERS EVERY MAN IN THE PLANT SACRIFICED TO GET FLASH—"TURN ON THE RIOT-RAY!" HE BARKS.

NEXT WEEK:
THE SHRIEKING
DOOM
12-15-40.



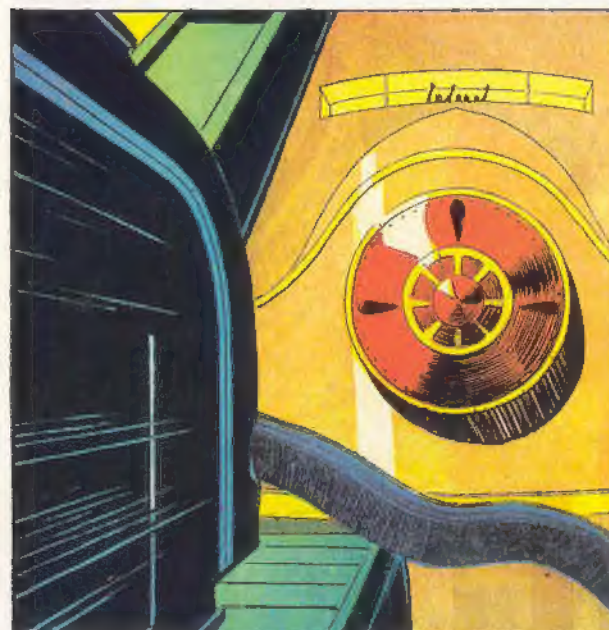
TO DESTROY FLASH, MING'S OFFICER ORDERS HIS TROUBLE-SHOOTERS TO START THE RIOT-RAY, A SHRIEKING, EAR-SHATTERING VIBRATION THAT FIRST MADDENS, THEN SWIFTLY KILLS.



WORKMEN AND SOLDIERS ALIKE GO MAD WITH FEAR AS THEY HEAR THE RAY'S LOW, RISING GROWL AND KNOW THAT THEY ARE ALL BEING SACRIFICED TO MING'S HATRED OF FLASH.



DALE'S SENSITIVE EARS AND MIND ARE THE FIRST TO SUCCEUM TO THE FIENDISH SCREECH.



WITH EVERYONE ELSE REDUCED TO HELPLESS, GIBBERING INSANITY, FLASH IS SO ENRAGED AT DALE'S SUFFERING THAT HE HEARS AND FEELS NOTHING, AS HE DRIVES HEADLONG AT THE SHRIEKING RAY-MACHINE.



WITH A RENDING CRASH, THE GREAT CONVEYOR CRANE PLOWS THROUGH THE RAY-MACHINE AND THE SOUND-PROOF HEADQUARTERS ABOVE, CRUSHING THOSE WHO HAD DOOMED THE WHOLE MILL TO A HORRIBLE FATE.

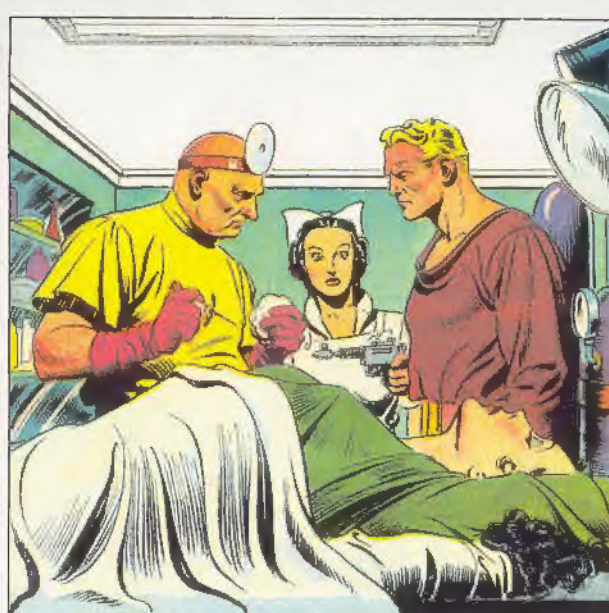


THE SILENCE IS STARTLING. SLOWLY, DAZED AND HORRIFIED MEN GET THEIR WITS BACK--BUT ONE STAGGERS BLINDLY OUT OF THE WRECKAGE MUTTERING--"DALE, DALE-- WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO YOU?"

NEXT WEEK:
IN A
TRANCE~



RECKLESSLY RISKING CAPTURE, FLASH CARRIES DALE'S UNCONSCIOUS BODY TO THE NEAREST DOCTOR'S OFFICE.



AFTER PLACING DALE ON AN OPERATING TABLE, THE DOCTOR STARES AT FLASH—"YOU'RE FLASH GORDON!" HE EXCLAIMS. "IT IS MY DUTY TO CALL MING'S MEN!" FLASH DRAWS HIS GUN—"YOUR FIRST DUTY IS TO YOUR PATIENT!" HE SNAPS.



THE DOCTOR DOES HIS BEST, BUT CAN ONLY ROUSE DALE TO A VAGUE TRANCE. FLASH HELPS HER TOWARD THE DOOR, SAYING, "DON'T GIVE AN ALARM, DOC—IF YOU WANT TO STAY HEALTHY!"



BUT THE DOCTOR DOES TURN IN AN ALARM—AND THE SIREN OF A SEARCHING PATROL CAR THROWS DALE INTO A FRENZY OF HORROR, AS IF IT WERE THE SHRIEKING RIOT-RAY THAT HAS SO SHOCKED HER NERVOUS SYSTEM.



ONCE MORE SHE LAPSES INTO A COMA. FLASH FINALLY GETS HER INTO THE QUIET AND TEMPORARY SAFETY OF A POWER TUNNEL.



THEY REACH THE POWER-MEN'S QUARTERS AND ERGON AND HIS SISTER, RENA, RUSH TO FLASH'S AID—BUT RENA'S EYES ARE ON FLASH—NOT HIS LIMP AND PITIFUL BURDEN.

NEXT WEEK:
THE TRAGIC BARRIER
12-29-40.



THE POWER-MEN'S DOCTOR EXAMINES DALE; THEN GIVES HIS VERDICT—"PHYSICALLY, SHE'S ALL RIGHT, BUT SHE'S MENTALLY SHOCKED FROM THAT UNBEARABLE, SHRIEKING MACHINE—"



"SHE NEEDS REST, QUIET, SEDATIVE RAY-LAMP TREATMENTS," CONTINUES THE DOCTOR. "SHE HAS FORGOTTEN YOU AND THE PAST. SHE MAY REMEMBER SOMETIME."



FLASH RETURNS TO DALE, BEARING A TRAY OF FOOD. THE DOOR SQUEAKS, DALE SCREAMS—"THE NOISE! SAVE ME! YOU'RE ALWAYS HERE WHEN THE SHRIEKING NOISE STARTS!"



RENA TRIES TO CONSOLE FLASH. "IT'S NO USE!" HE SAYS, DULLY. "THE DOCTOR SAYS I MUST STAY AWAY FROM DALE—MAYBE FOREVER!"



AT THAT MOMENT, TO THEIR AMAZEMENT, BULON RETURNS. FLASH LEAPS UP, SNARLING—"YOU'RE THE CAUSE OF THIS—YOU—"

"WAIT! WAIT!" STAMMERS BULON. "DON'T HIT ME! I—I'M A SICK MAN! MY HEAD—"



HE SLUMPS INTO A CHAIR. "ERSON TOLD ME WHAT I DID. I—I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I'M IN A DAZE—I—I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING. I MUST HAVE BEEN CRAZY!"

FLASH, SICK AT HEART, WANTING FRIENDS, NOT ENEMIES, GENEROUSLY TAKES THE POWER-MAN'S WORD AND FORGIVES HIM.

(1-5-41)

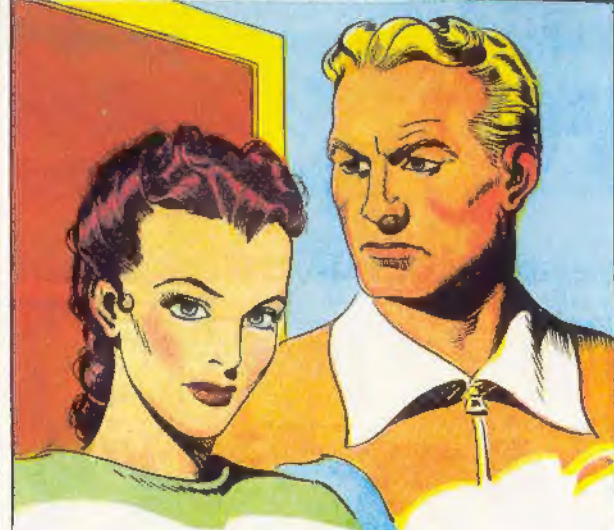
NEXT WEEK:
ATTACK FROM BEHIND

BULON IS SO OBVIOUSLY DISTRESSED OVER THE TRAGEDY HE HAS CAUSED THAT WARM-HEARTED FLASH FORGIVES HIM.



DALE'S DAZED AND SHOCKED MIND REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE FLASH, LINKING HIM ONLY WITH THE HORRORS THEY SO RECENTLY WENT THROUGH.

"DR. ZARKOV IS OUR LAST HOPE," SAYS FLASH TO RENA. "IF I COULD ONLY FIND HIM---"

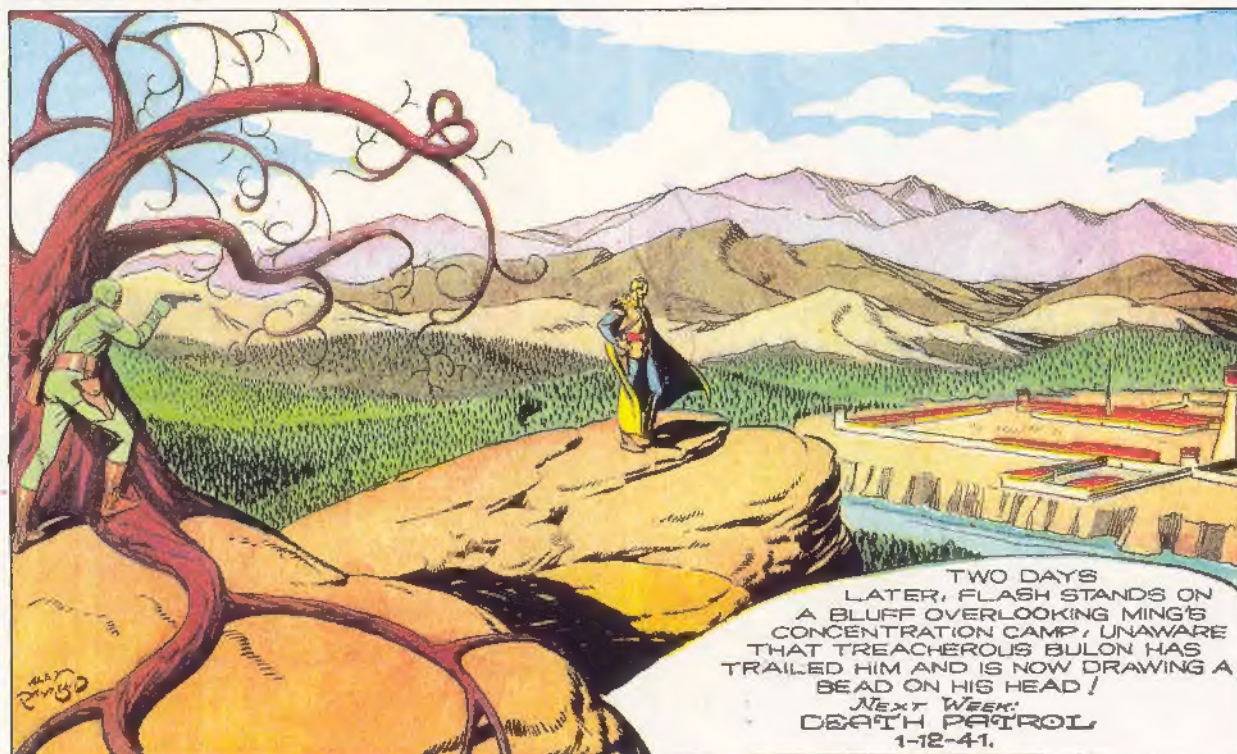


"ZARKOV? YES! I REMEMBER HIM," REPLIES RENA. "WHILE YOU WERE AWAY, HE LEFT HERE TO ATTEND ONE OF YOUR FREEMEN WHO HAD BEEN BADLY WOUNDED. HE NEVER RETURNED. WE LATER LEARNED HE HAD BEEN THROWN INTO A CONCENTRATION CAMP WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR BAND."

"WHY DIDN'T I HEAR OF THIS BEFORE?" DEMANDS FLASH.



SO FLASH SETS OUT ON A PERILOUS, BUT ALL-IMPORTANT VENTURE—A DARING, ONE-MAN RESCUE EXPEDITION AGAINST FEARFUL ODDS.



TWO DAYS LATER, FLASH STANDS ON A BLUFF OVERLOOKING MING'S CONCENTRATION CAMP, UNAWARE THAT TREACHEROUS BULON HAS TRAILED HIM AND IS NOW DRAWING A BEAD ON HIS HEAD!

NEXT WEEK:
DEATH PATROL
1-12-41.